

Harvard Paperbacks

Rights, Restitution, and Risk

Essays in Moral Theory

JUDITH JARVIS THOMSON

Edited by William Parent

"These essays are distinguished examples of analytical philosophy: clear, highly intelligent and scrupulously argued."

Bernard Williams

£8.95 Paper 288pp

0-674-76981-3

Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel

VICTOR BROMBERT

"Nothing short of brilliant. Solidly researched, very well written, and full of original insights, it stands as a landmark in Hugo criticism."

Nineteenth-Century French Studies

£7.95 Paper 320pp illus.

0-674-93551-9

Why Hitler Came Into Power

THEODORE ABEL

"The book's main purpose is to measure, in the light of the author's unique data, the relative importance of each of the main factors to which [Hitler's] rise to power has hitherto been ascribed."

American Political Science Review

£7.95 Paper 352pp

0-674-95200-6

Communities of Women

An Idea in Fiction

NINA AUERBACH

"... defines a new tradition in the English and American novel ... [It is] unusual, and points at a fresh and important direction for feminist criticism."

Feminist Studies

£6.95 Paper 232pp

0-674-15169-0

In the Heart's Last Kingdom

Robert Penn Warren's

Major Poetry

CALVIN BEDIENT

Bedient argues that it was in the long poem *Audubon* (1969) that Robert Penn Warren found his authentic poetic voice and persona.

Feminist Studies

£6.95 Paper 264pp

0-674-44547-3

The Critical Legal Studies Movement

ROBERTO MANGABEIRA UNGER

Develops the major ideas of an intellectual movement that has transformed traditional views of law and legal doctrine.

£6.95 Paper 144pp

0-674-17736-3

HARVARD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

126 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SD

The Times Literary Supplement

March 13 1987 Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4EX

Contents

The emollient Rab Butler 259-60
Education: Oxford from the Middle Ages; government v universities and schools 261-5
Judaism in the ancient world 278
Arthur Schlesinger - liberal history and hopes 267-8
Philip Roth's counter-lives 274
A. S. Byatt on Brigid Brophy's essays 269

AMERICAN HISTORY 267-8, ART 273, BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS 259-60, EDUCATION AND LITERATURE 261-5, ESSAYS 269, FICTION 274, HISTORY OF SCIENCE 281, MEDIEVAL STUDIES 279, ORNITHOLOGY 280, PHILOSOPHY 277, POETRY AND CRITICISM 275, POLITICS 266, RELIGION 278, SPANISH HISTORY 276

NORMAN GASH
JOHN FREEMAN
GURKE TREND
LINDA COLLEY

ALAN RYAN
C. BRIAN COX

ANDREW ROSENHEIM
PIOTR SOMMER
RIP BULKELEY

KEN BOOTH

JUDITH N. SHKLAR
ANDREW SINCLAIR
KENNETH O. MORGAN

A. S. BYATT
G. P. BUTLER
MASOLINO D'AMICO
LORNA SAGE
JAMES CAMPBELL

DAVID NOKES
BRIC SAMS
ARTHUR JACOBS

JACQUELINE EARNITT

TONY OODFREY
JOHN McLEAN
ERICA KORN
ANN VAUX
NEIL CORCORAN
SEAN O'BRIEN
PETER McDONALD
RICHARD FLETCHER
I. A. THOMPSON
JOHN EDWARDS
MALCOLM BUDD

FRANÇOIS RECANATI
TESSA RAJAK

J. R. PORTER
GILES CONSTABLE
ALAN BORG

ALEXANDER F. SKUTCH
CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
MARY GREPPIN
EUN DUNN
CHARLES WEBSTER

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

JOHN HENRY

Falling short

Norman Gash

ANTHONY HOWARD
RAB: The life of R. A. Butler
422pp, Cape, £15.
0234 01862 0

History records many men who were universally considered fit for supreme office - until they came to occupy it. The case of R. A. Butler is different. It is that of a man who was expected to reach the top, seemed to have more than one opportunity of doing so, but never did. Over his career float unanswered questions. Was he the best leader the Conservative Party ever had? How good a prime minister would he have been?

There is a quality of elusiveness, a sense of incompleteness, which make the writing of his biography both fascinating and difficult. In this, the first complete and authorized Life of Lord Butler, Anthony Howard has responded to the challenge. As a political study it will arouse interest now, when many of the events are still within public memory, and will keep its value even when the full official archives are open to historians. Apart from Butler's own papers, Mr Howard has consulted certain other unprinted sources, and he has interviewed many who lived through the period he describes. Oral evidence is notoriously untrustworthy but Howard is in no danger. "There is no more flawed source", he remarks trenchantly in his preface, "for recalling the events of yesterday than human recollection". Later on he provides examples of Butler's own fallibility in this respect.

In his general treatment of Butler's career Howard is equally shrewd and robust. Though his own liberal views make him less than indulgent towards Butler's right-wing critics in the Conservative Party, towards his subject he is eminently fair and sympathetic. He has organized his material efficiently and keeps a sensible balance between politics and administration, which is always a problem dealing with the life of a statesman who spent many years in office. His writing is not particularly stylish but it has the important virtues of clarity and economy. Above all, without either obtruding or withholding his own views, he provides his readers with enough evidence on which to form their own judgments. One's only regret is that he did not write a longer and more general conclusion than the seven final pages (interest-

ing as these are) entitled "The Man and the Legend".

One important point brought out in the early part of his book is not only how quickly but how easily success came Butler's way: too quickly, perhaps, and too easily. Though his father, still moving up the ladder of the Indian Civil Service, was not wealthy, he was able to send his eldest son to public school and university. At Cambridge, where the Butler clan was already entrenched (two uncles and a cousin were college fellows, one of them about to become the university's MP), Rab blossomed amazingly: a double first, president of the Union, fellow of Corpus. Brief sojourns with the Rothschilds and Courtauld families gave him a taste for high life and for the rest of his career he took a conscious pleasure in wealth, rank and title. The crowning point was his marriage to Sydney Courtauld, only child of the great textile magnate and one of the richest heiresses in England. After that it was roses all the way. Sam Courtauld settled on his son-in-law an annual income of £5,000 tax-free (the contemporary equivalent of a Cabinet minister's salary) and then obtained for him the nomination for the Conservative-held constituency of Saffron Walden, which duly returned him to the House of Commons in the general election of 1929 despite the national swing away from his party.

Well-to-do, well-connected, a demonstratively loyal Baldwinite, he soon began a dutiful apprenticeship as under-secretary at the India Office, the Ministry of Labour, and the Foreign Office. Up to the outbreak of war his record was that of a solid establishment man. He had been sorry for Hoare, did not care for Eden, was an unashamed advocate of appeasement, and mistrusted Churchill and his raffish tail. For Butler the resignation of Chamberlain in 1940 marked the passing of the old order of politics to which, by service and sympathy, he belonged. Logically, therefore, the formation of Churchill's wartime coalition should have been a political disaster. But it was characteristic of his career that disasters and ruptures were always avoided. Though he had made no secret of his pro-Munich views and clung to them longer than Chamberlain himself, he was urbane and clever, and had made few enemies. Churchill magnanimously acceded to Halifax's request that he should be kept on at the Foreign Office and the following year gave him the Presidency of the Board of Education. It was, presumably, not an office which ranked very high in the Prime Minister's mind as a contribu-

tion to the war effort. Nevertheless, the Butler family tradition was singularly devoid of military interests and Rab settled down happily to work on the education bill, which became law in 1944. He was also recruited into the party's policy-making organization. With his party out of office after 1945 it seemed natural that he should be invited to take charge of the moribund Conservative Party Research Department.

On the surface there seems an odd contrast between Butler's identification with the "old



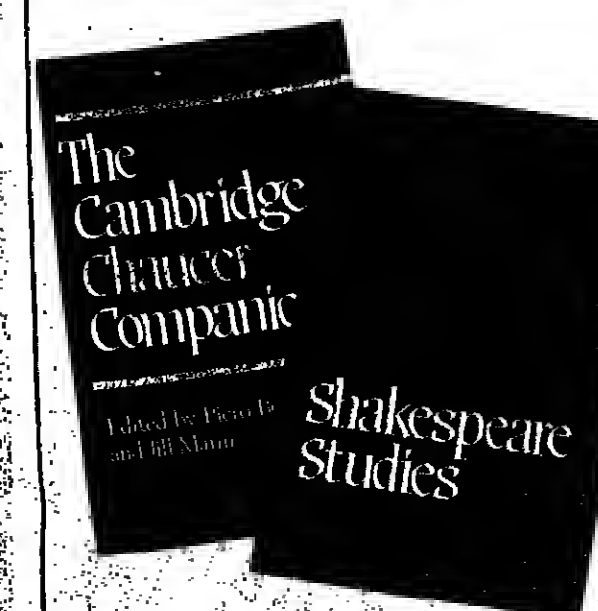
gang" of the Conservative Party up to 1940 and the liberal, progressive reputation he acquired in the decade after the war. Howard offers no explanation for the transformation; perhaps he did not think one was called for. The difficulty only exists for those who make Munich a kind of general touchstone for distinguishing between the "liberal" and the "reactionary" elements within the Conservative Party. It never was; and more continuity existed between the pre- and post-war party than is often assumed. Baldwin had genuine liberal views, not least (in contrast to Churchill) on India; Chamberlain was an enthusiastic administrative reformer. Butler had much in common with his two former leaders. Indeed, it was a moral revulsion against the brutal interruption to the orderly progress of domestic reform which would be

caused by a great European war that made such men unwilling to recognize the ineluctable nature of the threat from without. Butler in 1938 was prepared to tell the House of Commons that war would settle nothing (the perennial fallacy of the liberal mind) and that democratic and authoritarian states could peacefully co-exist in Europe. His belief in appeasement was due to the shortcomings not of his liberal heart but of his political brain.

In the event Butler's peaceful educational activities during, and the electoral defeat of the Conservatives after the war were decided advantages in the upward course of his career. There is nothing like disaster at the polls to make a party receptive to new ideas. As chairman of the powerful Industrial Policy Committee he fostered the party's modernization. He, as at the Board of Education, Butler was doing what came naturally and congenially, absorbing contemporary, progressive ideas and turning them into a programme for action. As he wrote long afterwards in a book he brought out in 1977, *The Conservatives* (not mentioned by Howard), "our contribution, flanked by the Workers' Charter, attempted to give capitalism a human look. In our approach to economics we were inspired by Keynes's *General Theory*." The orthodoxy of the wise and the good in the immediate post-war years could hardly be better summed up.

The industrious apprentice of the 1930s thus became, by a natural transition, the architect of his party's programme for the 1950s. In the process Butler not only took a place in the upper ranks of the party hierarchy but increasingly, as Churchill's second ministry drew to a close, was regarded as No 3 in the administration. In politics, however, being third is a slippery and short-lived distinction. Even in being second there is no security. In the course of the next fifteen years Butler served in one great office of state after another - Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Privy Seal, Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Leader of the House of Commons, Deputy Prime Minister, under four successive Prime Ministers. He acquired unrivalled experience of high office; but the highest of all eluded him. Howard singles out three occasions when the glittering prize seemed within reach: in 1953 when Churchill had his stroke and Eden was recovering in America from a major operation; in 1957 after the Suez débâcle; and in 1963 when Macmillan was forced by illness into retirement.

CAMBRIDGE



Geoffrey Chaucer: An Introduction to his Narrative Poetry

DIETER MEHL

This book serves both as a lucid introduction to Chaucer's narrative poetry for those lacking it afresh, and as an intelligent examination of the themes and techniques employed by Chaucer. Whilst taking full account of other critical approaches, the author produces his own distinctive and highly readable interpretation. 261 pp. 0 521 26839 7 Hard covers £25.00 net. 0 521 31888 2 Paperback £8.95 net

The Cambridge Chaucer Companion

Edited by PIERO BOITANI and JILL MANN

The *Cambridge Chaucer Companion* contains a series of essays by internationally-known Chaucer experts, designed to provide a challenging introduction to the poet. Taken as a whole, the collection establishes a context for Chaucer and applies to his poetry detailed and frequently innovative analyses. 271 pp. 0 521 30422 9 Hard covers £27.50 net. 0 521 31689 8 Paperback £8.95 net

The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare Studies

Edited by STANLEY WELLS

This comprehensive introduction to the study of Shakespeare offers a series of essays specially written by an international team of leading scholars. Particular attention is given to new critical approaches and the plays on film and television. Thus the book forms an indispensable companion to anyone with a serious interest in Shakespeare. 340 pp. 0 521 26737 4 Hard covers £27.50 net. 0 521 31841 6 Paperback £8.95 net

Shakespeare Survey 39

Shakespeare on Film and Television

Edited by STANLEY WELLS

This year's volume provides a comprehensive study of Shakespeare on film and television. The nineteen essays, by leading scholars in the field, include discussions of film adaptations of individual plays as well as studies of the BBC Shakespeare series and Shakespeare on radio. 269 pp. 0 521 32757 1 £27.50 net

Wordsworth and the Worth of Words

The late HUGH SYKES DAVIES

Edited by JOHN KERRIGAN and JONATHAN WORDSWORTH

In this book Hugh Sykes Davies addresses Wordsworth's major poetry. Language, and its interaction with genius are his central concern; but questions about Freud, Coleridge and the Romantic imagination are also discussed. A remarkable combination of analytic and empathic intelligence, this book should earn a place among the few essential studies of the poet. 346 pp. 0 521 30909 3 £30.00 net

Writing by Numbers

Trollope's Serial Fiction

MARY HAMER

This book examines the nineteenth-century practice of publishing fiction in serial form, and discusses its effect on the imaginative development of contemporary writers. In particular, it shows in detail how Trollope coped with writing novels that were going to be published as serials. 233 pp. 0 521 32528 5 £25.00 net

Bertolt Brecht

Chaos, According to Plan

JOHN FUEGI

This is the first full-length study in any language of Bertolt Brecht's day-by-day work as a theatre director. Professor Fuegi tells how Brecht worked and reacted with actors in rehearsal, creating the tensions and contradictions from which his best productions emerged. 237 pp. 0 521 23828 5 Hard covers £27.50 net. 0 521 28245 4 Paperback £9.95 net

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU, England

Virtuoso perceptions

John Freeman

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH
A View from the Stands: Of people, politics,
military power, and the arts
449pp. Hamish Hamilton. £14.95.
0241 120209

A View from the Stands is a 420-page conducted tour of the backwaters of J. K. Galbraith's life and times over the past twenty-five years and, more importantly, of his "off-duty" tastes and foibles and prejudices and obsessions. Of course the quality of these writings varies, and, as with any such scrapbook compilation, much depends on the editing, selection and research. Here Galbraith is lucky. Andrea Williams and Janey Siepmann have shown taste and for the most part discernment in the selection, as well as an evident diligence and piety in research.

Too much piety, perhaps. There is a noticeable disparity between the best and the less good in the book. Take India, for instance, on which Galbraith is an acknowledged authority: the preface to a republication of James Mill's *The History of British India* (1968) is a fine piece, illuminating, sharp, informative. "Introducing India", by contrast, the preface to a volume of essays by Frank Moraes and Edward Howe, is a very ordinary piece of commissioned writing. *The Washington Post* review of Stanley Wolpert's *Jimnath of Pakistan* (1984) is surely no more than perfunctory hack journalism.

A passion for individuality

Burke Trend

JOHN VAIZEY
Scenes from Institutional Life and other
writings
164pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12.95.
0297 7868 X

This book is a tribute to the memory of a great survivor, a man who overcame, with a grim and bitter determination, the physical and psychological impediments inflicted on him by the onslaught of osteomyelitis at the age of fourteen. It is virtually impossible to re-create in one's own imagination the nerve-shattering pain so relentlessly recorded in *Scenes from Institutional Life* and the apparently callous and indifferent treatment which was perhaps all that a wartime hospital could provide. The effect on an intelligent and sensitive teenager finds its only parallel, so far as I know, in the writing of Denton Welch. Both men were young when disaster struck; both endured intense pain over a long period; and both testify, unforgettably, to its crippling effects on character and sensibility.

Like Welch, only more intensively, Vaizey will have nothing to do with the conventional answers to the problem of unmitigated suffering. It is no comfort to be told that others have suffered as much, if not more; or that one's personal agony is merely a small part of the universal agony of mankind. Least of all is it acceptable to be told that pain is ennobling, a reinforcement of character and a spiritual purification.

It was self-evident to me that my own suffering had turned me into a whining, self-pitying wreck of a personality. I hated myself; my illness, those who were sick, those who were well, the hospital and those who served it. In many important directions I have never lost this hatred in later life; it forms the backdrop of anger and protest against which I see many scenes of my life. I hated and I hated.

There have been few more powerful indictments of the irrational injustice of life; and few more terrifying illustrations of the psychological damage which intense physical suffering can inflict. Vaizey's own solution was "to come to terms with my unhappiness by killing emotion". He retired into a private world of deliberate non-communication; and by his own account paid a most terrible price (ten years later, when all the emotions which had been pent up for so long burst through, it did with minute expression in *Scenes from Institutional Life*).

whereas the review (*Film Comment*, 1983) of Attenborough's *Gandhi* is highly perceptive, well judged—and right: by far the most insightful comment on this flawed but monumental work that I have seen. Of the finer pieces on Indian art, that on W. G. Archer (*A New York Times* book review, 1974) should be singled out: the others are far less effective.

A View from the Stands is not essentially about economics, or even about politics: here we are concerned with Galbraith the man; with his personal likes and dislikes; with Gloria Steinem and Rab Butler, Richard Nixon and David Niven, J. M. Keynes and Barbara Ward, Lyndon Johnson and Mahatma Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt and Malcolm Muggeridge, Robert Kennedy and Jamie Hamilton and Evelyn Waugh—a selection (chosen at random) which illustrates a diverting catholicity of taste and interest. In some ways the book is more revealing than *A Life in Our Times*, his previously published memoirs. And the man revealed is substantial, interesting, frequently perverse, occasionally silly, almost always stimulating—at least hardly ever a bore—optimistic, funny, fastidious, loyal, on the whole generous and magnificently infallible even when he is wrong.

The few more or less "weighty" political essays may strike some readers as having less value than many of those crafted with a lighter touch. Galbraith does not always seem to apply to his political rhetoric quite the same rigorous intellectual discipline which he properly requires from his conservative antagonists. His

sententious exhortations on the Bomb and arms control, affirmative action, the "starvation" of the cities, though oozing with good intent, are neither fully convincing nor very original. When he descends from the lofty and uses the more vernacular arts of satire, ribaldry, indignation and occasionally downright invective on similarly important subjects, he is not only effectively persuasive, but a joy to read. The eulogy on Chester Bowles (*The New York Times* book review of Bowles's *Promises to Keep*, 1971), for instance, originally a *New York Times* book review of Bowles's *Promises to Keep*, is a passionate and aggressive defence of his friend, which deserves to be noted as a serious historical comment.

Galbraith's earlier works, such as *The Affluent Society* and *The New Industrial State*, owed much of their success to being well written, but it is when one sees a wide miscellany of his work—articles, reviews, speeches, letters, prefaces over nearly a quarter of a century, gathered in one volume that the economy, clarity and pungency of his writing become apparent. His not altogether unfriendly dismissal of Mountbatten, "an outstanding example of upward failure", in a *Washington Post* review of Philip Ziegler's biography, is a splendid piece of comic irony. "All his life Mountbatten was repeatedly sought out by people who wanted less thought and more action, both of which he could provide." Moreover he resists the temptation to allow virtuoso writing to cloud specific meaning: the perception is used to illuminate the perception; the perception is almost always sharp and personal—if from time to time perverse.

hospital bed, where he was awaiting an operation which he did not expect to survive, that he launched his denunciation of that creed and asserted his conviction that "the only workable set of political principles in force in Europe today is Tory pragmatism". Even the subsequent formation of the SDP, which one might have expected to be more congenial to Vaizey than full-blooded Conservatism, failed to enlist his allegiance. His objection, he says, was one of principle:

Their ideas are based on a fallacy. They believe that the non-Marxist social sciences represent a valid alternative to Marxism as techniques of analysis and prescription for what are perceived as social ills. I have come to the view, long held by thinkers like Oakeshott, that politics is mainly a matter of truth and judgment; that the unexpected usually happens; that the good life is usually unaffected by state action; and, above all, that the social sciences, while occasionally fun or exciting, are (like history, English criticism and philosophy) empty at all to do with day-to-day action. . . . Those who think they are applying scientific principles to social life are doing more harm than good.

And so the wheel came full circle. Even so, Vaizey was entitled to claim that he remained faithful to his basic principles throughout his public career. He came to believe that the socialism which he had originally embraced as representing the cause of the dispossessed and the suffering resulted, necessarily and inevitably, in political tyranny; and this became as repellent to him as the personal tyranny which had earlier been typified by hospitals and other institutions. In each case it was the unique, irreplaceable individual who had to be protected from the malign, inhibiting influence of those who were so wrongly convinced that they knew, better than himself, what was good for him. To this conviction Vaizey held true; and he would certainly have regarded the value judgment which it embodied as more important than mere intellectual consistency. He once said of himself, "I don't mind being one of the great, but I don't want to be one of the good". It will be ironic, an irony which himself might have appreciated, if the judgment of posterity denies him both parts of his desire.

Towards the end of his life he discovered this for himself, and the selection of his other writings which constitutes the remainder of this book documents his process of discovery. His early revolt against the institutionalized Establishment led him, naturally enough, to become a socialist; with a keen and professional interest in economics and the social sciences. But by 1978, he had decided to leave the Labour Party; and twelve months later, only four years before his untimely death, he accepted the Conservative whip. He justified his action in a letter to *The Times* in December 1980; and there is an odd symmetry in the fact that, as it had been his experience in his first hospital that had given him his original incentive to embrace the socialist creed, so it was once again from a

The eleventh edition of *Priest and Coppock's UK Economy: A manual of applied economics*, edited by M. J. Artia (366pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. Paperback, £8.95. 0 297 78996 1) has recently been published. First issued in 1964, the book is revised every two years; contributors include M. C. Kennedy, R. L. Harrington, C. J. Green and J. S. Metcalfe.

An obsession with the State

Linda Colley

J. I. CATTO (Editor, with Ralph Evans)
The History of the University of Oxford
Volume One: The early Oxford schools
728pp. £60.
019551013 3
JAMES MCCONICA (Editor)
The History of the University of Oxford
Volume Three: The collegiate university
800pp. £60.
019551013 X
L. S. SUTHERLAND and L. G. MITCHELL
(Editors)
The History of the University of Oxford
Volume Five: The eighteenth century
800pp. £75.
019551013 5
Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Why has the University of Oxford always been more eager than Cambridge to reconstruct its history? Is it that the former University exerts the latter in self-regard? Or was the poet William Cowper right to remark that whenever one of these ancient institutions made a move, the other stood still to demonstrate its superiority? Whatever the reason, in 1966, while Cambridge was putting up its new history faculty building, Oxford determined upon a less practical but perhaps in the end more durable monument—a multi-volume history that would draw on the wealth of all its college archives and on the wisdom of an array of British and North American scholars. It was important, judged Lord Bullock, in the light of the Franks Commission of Inquiry into Oxford University, "to put these reforms into a proper historical perspective [which] would be a declaration of confidence in ourselves as heirs to a great tradition". As it happened, the Franks Report was never properly implemented, but the history was. Not for the first time in Oxford's experience, reform founded but the work of retrospection endured.

Indeed, in many ways it has triumphed. These three massive and magnificently produced volumes are to be followed by five more. Once they are available, we will have a history of Oxford University that stretches from the twelfth century to the present, a treasure trove of anecdote, information and fine scholarship that will easily outlast any other university history in existence. What we will not necessarily have, however, is a clearer sense of how exactly the history of a university should be written. Should it, for example, emphasize intellectual history? Or focus on an institution and its composite buildings? To what extent should it analyse the social provenance and subsequent worldly careers of the student body? And how far can one treat the history of a university in isolation from that of the State?

It is very much to the credit of their General Editor, the late T. H. Aston, that these three volumes all recognize the scale and diversity of the task. In none of them, however—though James McConica makes a notably determined and intelligent effort—has this diversity been tamed and reduced to a systematic and coherent methodology. Instead, the different facets of Oxford's past have been allocated to different, (and sometimes, differing) scholars. Fourteen of them were involved in the production of Volume One, and fourteen more in Volume Three; while the sheer bulk of Volume Five is partly to be explained by its twenty-three contributors. Predictably, too, each volume has been shaped by the research interests of its editors and the availability of sources. Thus J. I. Catto and Ralph Evans have compensated for a paucity of domestic detail by scouring eighteen Continental archives and devoting six chapters to the Oxford schools' contribution to European culture. Conversely, the eighteenth-century volume has been moulded by its editors' expertise in English political history, and is concerned with the rest of Europe not at all; the Enlightenment does not even feature in its index.

Oxford's story is a complicated one, its early history sparsely documented and obscure. Some time after 1095, a single schoolmaster established himself at Oxford. A century later, seventy masters were teaching there. A century later still, and the successors of these men possessed sufficient corporate identity to seek

to elect their own Chancellor instead of accepting the Bishop of Lincoln's nominee. In this they failed, largely because their influence was still so puny. Intellectually, medieval Oxford was overshadowed by the older and much wealthier schools of northern Italy and northern France. At home, most of its students were lodged parsimoniously in over 120 Halls and divided, often violently, into Northerners and Southerners. (The boundary then was the River Nene.) None the less, there was growing confidence, and with reason. Scholars like Walter Burley and William of Ockham pioneered a brand of logic and natural philosophy that commanded Western Europe's grudging admiration. (More basely, there was "bousynge and drynkyng", complemented in the late thirteenth century by Oxford town's growing supply of prostitutes and, in the fourteenth century, by an improvement in living standards—John Wyclif, we are told, rented rooms at Queen's College with a latrine of his own.)

What transformed this miscellaneous enterprise into a distinguished and distinctive university was the emergence of a collegiate system and, much more importantly, the sponsorship of the English nation state. In 1348 Oxford possessed only six secular colleges. By the 1580s there were sixteen of them, housing two-thirds of the student body in a much grander architectural style. Magnificent formal quadrangles had been laid out, as at New College; halls and chapels had been panelled, as at Magdalen. This new splendour derived from an increase in benefactions, which in turn produced more, as nostalgic alumni and rich widows donated money that could no longer be absorbed by the dissolved monasteries and chantries of post-Reformation England.

But Oxford colleges, like those of Cambridge, have always represented much more than material wealth. They are, rather, a prime expression of what Tocqueville rightly diagnosed as the stereotypical English institution—the club. As such, and at their best, they provided (and still provide) for rare congeniality and intellectual exchange. At their worst, they exuded (and can still exude) an arrogant and parochial exclusiveness. In the past, both of these tendencies made for educational variety and institutional strength, while contributing to the notion that Oxford was a bastion of autonomy as well as of privilege. Yet, as all these volumes make clear, absolute autonomy was rare and rarely desired. What Oxford men wanted was government patronage and protection: the price was co-operation and a willingness to conform.

Successive English monarchs looked to Oxford for both strategic and cerebral assets. Its easy access to the midlands and to Wales involved it in Stephen's civil wars in the twelfth century, led Henry III to make it his centre of military operations in 1264, and Charles I to select it as his headquarters in the 1640s. More generally, their Latin, their literacy and their legal knowledge drew a growing number of Oxford graduates into royal and episcopal employment. Once there, they could and did advance their own. Cardinal Wolsey, one-time Fellow of Magdalen, employed over one hundred Oxford men in his household, while a lesser but luckier Tudor politician, Sir William Petrie, transformed his Alms Mater, Exeter College, by a princely benefaction in 1566.

Indeed, as Claire Cross comments in the McConica volume, the Tudor era cemented and accentuated Oxford's previous reliance on the State. Since so many fellows and graduates had ecclesiastical ambitions, the establishment of a State Church made them all the more dependent on royal pleasure. A series of royal visitations—in 1535, 1549, 1556 and 1559—only dramatized the fact that Tudor monarchs required Oxford to legitimize and affirm their fluctuating religious and dynastic settlements. There were many individual dissidents, but as a body Oxford obliged. It reluctantly endorsed Henry VIII's divorce of Catherine of Aragon; under Edward VI it practised iconoclasm and accepted the leading reformer Peter Martyr as its Regius Professor of Theology; under Queen Mary it became a centre for the Counter-Reformation, the testing-ground of Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer, who were burnt at the stake in Oxford's market square.

The rewards for such assiduous versatility were immediate and extensive. Under

Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts a now moderately Anglican Oxford flourished in happy symbiosis with a moderately Anglican polity. But its more pronounced dependence on the Crown, together with its continual dependence on the Church, was likely to make Oxford vulnerable if those two authorities were ever in conflict. After 1685 they frequently were. James II defied the Church of England and sought to promote Catholics; Oxford opposed him. William III wanted a more comprehensive religious policy; Oxford resisted him. When the Lutheran Hanoverians and Whig Supremacy arrived in 1714, the university's High Church posture and Tory politics attracted blanket accusations of Jacobite treason. The substance behind this slur was limited, but Oxford's morale still plummeted and so in the eighteenth century did its scholarly reputation.

With Volume Five of this series, however, comes formidable if not final vindication. As early as 1772, the late Lucy Sutherland sought to rescue Georgian Oxford from its many contemporary and subsequent critics, arguing, as her co-editor L. G. Mitchell argues here, that "The university did not mark time in the eighteenth century, and although movement might be limited in scope, movement there undoubtedly was". But, one must ask, how much?

For as Mitchell's restraint suggests, the evidence that eighteenth-century Oxford was torpid and corrupt is extensive and varied. It was predictable, perhaps, that the brilliant and pious Edward Gibbon would find the high Anglican and low-achieving Fellows of Magdalen risible, and in his *Autobiography* he famously did. But even that most conservative and least iconoclastic of men, Lord Chancellor Eldon, dismissed his Oxford examination as a farce. The university produced few scholars of international repute in this period, and those it did it often failed to keep or to acknowledge. William Blackstone resigned from the Vinerian Chair of Law as soon as his *Commentaries* came to be published. Thomas Beddoes, who should have been the university's first Professor of Chemistry, was forced to leave it because of his radical politics. And when Samuel Johnson finished his dictionary and returned in triumph to his old college, Pembroke, its Master still failed to invite him to dinner.

The fellows who remained in residence were often dull and sometimes drunk, sunk—as Sydney Smith complained—in "nervous jealousy and littleness", "useless", as John Wesley declared, "to a proverbial uselessness". Which explains why one student of Christ Church (again, scarcely a hotbed of radicalism) should have suggested in 1715—quite seriously it seems—that a special college called Drone Hall should be created for superannuated Oxford dons.

Such testimonies (and they all come out of this book) make eighteenth-century Oxford sound like the location of one of Gulliver's least rewarding travels, full of Lilliputians in intellectual stature, Laputians in academic utility, and with scarcely a worthwhile Houyhnhnm to be seen. The students were not thick on the ground either. As V. H. H. Green remarks in one of the three excellent chapters he contributes here, "the most obvious feature of Oxford's history in the eighteenth century was the decline in the number of undergraduates". Matriculations fell from over 450 in the 1660s to under 200 in 1750 and had still to exceed 250 in the 1790s.

This, then, is the well-documented and familiar case for the prosecution. The prime extenuating factor is that in this period—and most unusually—Oxford was in bondage to the British State without being very much assisted by it. The Laudian statutes of the 1630s inhibited the evolution of its curriculum, and restricted its membership to men who subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. This divorced the university from a great deal of scientific and medical talent at home, since it was Dissenters who now dominated these fields. Even worse, since

Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts a now moderately Anglican Oxford flourished in happy symbiosis with a moderately Anglican polity. But its more pronounced dependence on the Crown, together with its continual dependence on the Church, was likely to make Oxford vulnerable if those two authorities were ever in conflict. After 1685 they frequently were. James II defied the Church of England and sought to promote Catholics; Oxford opposed him. William III wanted a more comprehensive religious policy; Oxford resisted him. When the Lutheran Hanoverians and Whig Supremacy arrived in 1714, the university's High Church posture and Tory politics attracted blanket accusations of Jacobite treason. The substance behind this slur was limited, but Oxford's morale still plummeted and so in the eighteenth century did its scholarly reputation.

With Volume Five of this series, however, comes formidable if not final vindication. As early as 1772, the late Lucy Sutherland sought to rescue Georgian Oxford from its many contemporary and subsequent critics, arguing, as her co-editor L. G. Mitchell argues here, that "The university did not mark time in the eighteenth century, and although movement might be limited in scope, movement there undoubtedly was". But, one must ask, how much?

For as Mitchell's restraint suggests, the evidence that eighteenth-century Oxford was torpid and corrupt is extensive and varied. It was predictable, perhaps, that the brilliant and pious Edward Gibbon would find the high Anglican and low-achieving Fellows of Magdalen risible, and in his *Autobiography* he famously did. But even that most conservative and least iconoclastic of men, Lord Chancellor Eldon, dismissed his Oxford examination as a farce. The university produced few scholars of international repute in this period, and those it did it often failed to keep or to acknowledge. William Blackstone resigned from the Vinerian Chair of Law as soon as his *Commentaries* came to be published. Thomas Beddoes, who should have been the university's first Professor of Chemistry, was forced to leave it because of his radical politics. And when Samuel Johnson finished his dictionary and returned in triumph to his old college, Pembroke, its Master still failed to invite him to dinner.

The fellows who remained in residence were often dull and sometimes drunk, sunk—as Sydney Smith complained—in "nervous jealousy and littleness", "useless", as John Wesley declared, "to a proverbial uselessness". Which explains why one student of Christ Church (again, scarcely a hotbed of radicalism) should have suggested in 1715—quite seriously it seems—that a special college called Drone Hall should be created for superannuated Oxford dons.

Such testimonies (and they all come out of this book) make eighteenth-century Oxford sound like the location of one of Gulliver's least rewarding travels, full of Lilliputians in intellectual stature, Laputians in academic utility, and with scarcely a worthwhile Houyhnhnm to be seen. The students were not thick on the ground either. As V. H. H. Green remarks in one of the three excellent chapters he contributes here, "the most obvious feature of Oxford's history in the eighteenth century was the decline in the number of undergraduates". Matriculations fell from over 450 in the 1660s to under 200 in 1750 and had still to exceed 250 in the 1790s.

This, then, is the well-documented and familiar case for the prosecution. The prime extenuating factor is that in this period—and most unusually—Oxford was in bondage to the British State without being very much assisted by it. The Laudian statutes of the 1630s inhibited the evolution of its curriculum, and restricted its membership to men who subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. This divorced the university from a great deal of scientific and medical talent at home, since it was Dissenters who now dominated these fields. Even worse, since

Rereading the Past



Pandora's Daughters

The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity

by Eva Cantarella
translated by Maureen B. Fant, with a foreword by
Mary R. Lefkowitz

"In their abstraction and generality," writes Eva Cantarella, "the rules of law allow reconstruction of the life of all free women who have passed through history without entering it." *Pandora's Daughters* is the first history of women in ancient Greece and Rome written from a legal perspective. Moving outward from an examination of the legal evidence—laws governing marriage and divorce, sexual behavior, and inheritance—Eva Cantarella demonstrates how literary, anecdotal, and juridical sources can and cannot be used to reveal the treatment of women in Greek and Roman society.

£23.55 hardcover £7.80 paperback

Literary Theory/ Renaissance Texts

edited by Patricia Parker and David Quint

"An exemplary collective accomplishment in comparative literature. . . . The results are important for all those who seek to understand a group of English and European masterworks that will define our cultural heritage."—Jonathan Arac, Duke University

In fifteen chapters, leading scholars apply a broad range of theoretical approaches—including deconstruction, Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, and "new historicism"—to genuinely new readings of Renaissance literature. With contributions by Terence Cave, Eugenio Donato, John Freccero, Stephen Greenblatt, Thomas Greene, and others.

£23.55 hardcover £10.20 paperback



THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS
400 North Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21202-1000

Robin Corbett MP, together with his wife Val Hudson, has assembled a collection of vote-winning jokes and stories. *Can I Count on You?* (366pp. Stanley Paul. £7.95. 0 91 662508). Proceeds from sale of the book go to the Save the Children Fund.

Handwritten note: "John Colley 13.16"

A cause for indignation

T. J. Reed

NEGLY HARTE
The University of London 1836-1986: An illustrated history
303pp. Athlone. £11.95 (paperback, £4.95).
048511299 X

This might not seem a time for academics in Britain to celebrate. But then, we can't choose the circumstances in which our great academic institutions round up their centuries and half-centuries; and recalling a proud past record may put the pressures of our day into sane perspective in all their intrinsic pettiness. A desperate situation, but not serious, as the Viennese say. At all events, it would be a gloomy day that let the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the University of London pass in silence, and to mark it we have Negley Harte's history.

It is a book of dry information leavened by dry wit in its choice of quotations and its picture captions. If you want to know how Britain's largest university came about, through every twist and turn of proposal and opposition, enquiry and controversy, with thumbnail sketches of the personalities involved, it's all there in brief compass and clear outline.

And a hizzorra story it is. Founded by government in an age of *laissez-faire*, with the Treasury at first generous, then watching every shilling on the porters' wages, the University began as a purely examining authority to validate other foundations' students; for a long time it resisted as corrupt the notion that it should itself teach those it examined (Senate in 1864 said that "lectures would not be desirable in connection with the University"). Leaving all such things to University College, King's College and others (whose history this is not); it led, at a succession of inadequate premises, an existence unrecognized by taxi-drivers and dubious even to itself; it eventually acquired the Bloomsbury site; lost it; regained it at a higher price; built on it; and at last stood there in a brick-and-stone substantiality that its fifty-five disparate institutions could more readily relate to. Insiders still recommend ignoring the federal structure (which they claim they do not understand themselves) and sticking instead to the local realities of each "School" (such as the Institute of Education) or each "Institute" (such as the School of Slavonic and East European Studies).

But London University is more than either its federal administrative structure or its constituent parts. At its dense core between Euston Road and the British Museum, it is a massed academic presence - UCL and Birkbeck, the Courtauld Gallery and Courtauld and Warburg Institutes, the Schools of Oriental and African Studies, of Slavonic and East European Studies, of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the Institutes of Historical Research and Germanic Studies, with the Senate House as a banner - asserting itself in the resistant environment of an immense city. The effect here is not diluted by domesticity, as in Oxford and Cambridge; the buildings are not cloyingly describable as "heritage"; there is no irrelevant admixture of social pretension and advantage. In the atmosphere. The bones of a university's activity lie bare: the pursuit and transmission of knowledge. What, beyond that, the University did to shape society lies close to those central purposes. It opened doors to study and advancement which religion, class and sexual discrimination had everywhere else kept firmly shut; and it reshaped the syllabus of modern knowledge, confirming the centrality of science, and introducing modern languages. (It was a venial sin by comparison to have the occasional ceremonial oration in Latin.)

Nones of this was achieved without a struggle, or some backsliding. Early changes to allow women to take exams were mislaid; there could be a member of Senate (Arnold of Rugby, no less) who did not believe it right to award degrees to Jews. But these details yield to a longer perspective. What is a celebratory history for if not to give us a sense of things we can take them for granted? If took a Frenchman to find the higher rhetoric to express them (Louis Combarieu, Professor of English at the University of Paris, on the occasion of

London's hundredth anniversary: "In the spirit and tradition of this University lies infused the most indestructible soul of democracy: the love that yearns to bring the common culture to all the children of the land. In that spirit and that tradition is enshrined as well the devotion of the scientist: his religion of the quest, ever spreading and ever renewed, of disinterested knowledge.")

Those phrases might have been borrowed to characterize universities generally, and still apply. If they need modifying, it is only by making explicit what was (then) too obvious to need stating, namely, that practical benefits to society also followed: that "culture" was not a narrowly personal or inert possession, but something which produced an enhanced awareness and performance in whatever people did; and that "disinterested knowledge" was not useless knowledge, but meant knowledge established with the freedom from bias which makes it reliable for practical application as well as for pure contemplation. This in the end is the justification for academic work to those who are asked to pay for it (the taxpayers, that is, who earn the money, not the politicians, who merely channel it, or refuse to); that in these two ways it pays society a good return as a by-product of maintaining its own standards, and of following out the inner logic of its investigations. The request is, admittedly, for an act of faith; but it is a faith that can rest on evidence; which lies (or till recently lay) in an enlightened society with a commitment to reflectiveness and compassion, and in the creation by free research, freely pursued, of innovations whose utility ordinary people might judge.

Any such organic conception of culture is a closed book to a government like the present British one, with its penny-in, tuppence-out demands, which has pushed the universities, and educational provision at all levels, into a sharp decline. The pathetic superficialities of its Green Paper - half-hearted references to the value of arts courses if sufficiently "rigorous", or to "education for pleasure and general culture", plainly a luxury that cannot really be afforded - have been called "philistine" many times. Given the way that term is commonly used, it may seem the government was merely being accused of not sufficiently liking what other people do like - conflicting views on the desirability of what is still a luxury. But "philistine" in fact applies here in all the range and rigour of Matthew Arnold's usage: the philistine does not trust, does not have any regard for, barely even recognizes ideas as the vital and transforming elements in society that they are. Hence the mere lip-service to arts courses which goes along with a desire to reduce them, and with a disbelief that they really produce a kind of graduate we need. (Commercial and industrial firms - and successful ones - argue the reverse; but are no more listened to than anyone else.)

As for the logic of basic research - it is the ground from which new growths have always sprung unlooked-for in the past, and you cannot have continuing applied technology without a continuing basic science to apply - this, being an idea in Arnold's sense, is not trusted, not regarded, simply in the end rejected because it demands a spread of resources; and the dominant counter-plan is to save resources instead of investing them. Investment has been the British weak point for decades, under all governments. Now, however, the failure to invest is creeping gangrenously further back: we save money on the most fundamental investment of all, trained minds and new work, so as to free resources. For what? The bread and circuses of tax cuts, George Walden is seen on television regretfully justifying the limits on scientific investment: there are, he says, old people in society who need treatment - as if these were incompatible alternatives rather than equal imperatives.

Of course, the politician's time-scale is short: one term of office is success, three is a record. If fundamental necessities can be put off for a time, that too is a success, even though the bills, one way or another, will come eventually. But they are already beginning to come in now, in the flagging productivity of certain sciences (biology, physics), carefully monitored by the Royal Society; in the growing number of scientists and other academics who are trained and utilized at a high level

come cheap to the foreign employer. He is glad to take over the responsibility of providing the working facilities that are lacking in this country.

At least now the situation is becoming unmistakably clear, and its nature is being widely publicized and recognized. We have come some way over the past two or three years, since the height of the government's campaign to persuade the public that the universities had somehow failed the nation. (With its customary intellectual subtlety, it never quite explained how: since university-trained people were everywhere in the economy, and the economy was doing badly, the argument implicitly rose to the dizzy heights of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*: recrimination stood in for analysis and policy.) Now the responsibility has to be government's for gratuitously hacking at what was an internationally highly regarded university system. Gestures have been made, some money has returned, but the realities of institutional finance are such that there are degrees of damage that cannot be put right, even if sums now offered were multiplied several times.

Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in London's case. Harte says little about the hacking of London's institutions in the Thatcher years. He speaks guardedly of the "new financial climate" (that said chief which gives powers beyond human control), he says that "too much has happened in the last ten years for comprehensive summary", he speaks of Queen Mary College being "enhanced" by transfers of staff and students from Westfield, and inevitably of "restructuring". No doubt in an anniversary volume the sad realities may have been thought out of place. But there should be limits to euphemism. London University's staff has suffered years of nerve-wearing work, dismembering its own institutions and trying to patch new and viable compounds together. Proud traditions have been destroyed. Bedford College has gone to its merged form with Royal Holloway, it is up at the largest arts faculty in the University, yet is placed at the further remove from libraries, colloquia and inter-collegiate teaching. The individual departments are too large to be viable on the Egham site. Management consultants have rehugged the brave new merger work, and a 10 per cent cut in academic staff is now planned by October 1987. Westfield, having lost its sciences to "enhance" QMC, is left too small to survive long. Far from "consolidating several suitors", the college is a girl without dowry, desperate to be rescued. Birkbeck's troubles have been widely publicized: no more needs to be said than that a college which works (and has done since before the University itself was founded) in adult and "second-chance" education is a good measure of the educational values of those responsible for funding it. Even after the revised assessment of its students' "part-time" character, it is in grave peril. For all the reorganizing, the pattern of the University will be administratively no less haphazard and heterogeneous than it always has been; there will be less of it, but it may be weaker rather than healthier, in line with what in Britain that is now described as "filter and learner", which tends to mean lacking a limb here or there. And, as in institutions all over the country, the cost has been in energies and concentration stolen from teaching and research, which are our proper business.

Of all this, even - or perhaps, to defuse, especially - a celebratory volume might have made something: it is hard to value one's situation without feeling a proper indignation at the irresponsible policies that have damaged it and are damaging it still. Academics have no duty to remain *werewolf* when the values of their profession are themselves under attack. The University's Chancellor in her forward reflects how natural it is "to indulge in some rough beating" at such a major milestone. True enough, and we properly rejoice with a great university which once did so much to lead and enlighten its older brethren. But underneath the celebratory drum-rolls another, muted drum can be heard beating for casualties past and losses not yet fully counted.

An anthology in *Celebration of King's College Chapel*, compiled by Graham Chabrier, has recently been published (80pp: Cambridge University Press for King's College, Cambridge, £2.95. 0 907115 43 8).

Schools - who should be in charge?

Roderick Floud

ALAN WEEKS
Comprehensive Schools: Past, present and future
228pp. Methuen. £15.
0 416 40690 4

ERIC HEWTON
Education in Recession: Crisis in County Hall and classroom
191pp. Allen and Unwin. £15 (paperback, £5.95).

001379003 8
DENNIS O'KEEFE (Editor)
The Wayward Curriculum: A cause for parents' concern?
277pp. Social Affairs Unit. £9.95.
0 976311 9 3

FRANK E. HUGGETT
Teachers: First-hand views of the classroom crisis
215pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £10.95.
0 97178791 8

JEANNIE OAKES
Keeping Track: How schools structure inequality
213pp. Yale University Press. Paperback, £8.95.

0 300 03292 7
IRA SHOR
Cultural Wars: School and society in the Conservative restoration 1969-1984
283pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £19.95 (paperback, £6.95).
0 7102 0637 2

Education is an intensely political subject. Because, both individually and collectively, we care about our children, and because in Great Britain those children are almost all educated at some public expense - among them those who, having been to fee-paying schools, study free at university - it cannot be otherwise. Moreover, the demand for education, like that for health, will never be satisfied. The frequent cry that "education should be taken out of politics" is therefore futile, an agonized response to the latest twist or turn of policy which the speaker distastes. It ignores the need for someone to decide, to spend, to monitor. But to whom should education belong?

At the moment the British educational stage is packed with actors shouting to be heard. The Education Minister, Kenneth Baker, and Lord Young vie in producing the more new initiatives per week; local authorities mutter the refrain of local autonomy; teachers call for more pay and higher status; while parents are alternately led on to the platform and relegated to the audience, largely dumb in both roles. The pupils, for the most part, cower centre stage while their elders trade insults above their heads.

In reality, there are several plays going on at once. A main conflict has long been that between central government, in the person of the Secretary of State, and the local authorities who, at least in theory, pay. This conflict is about power: the power to decide how schools should be organized and managed. From the nineteenth century, the relative powers of centre and locality have waxed and waned, but since the Education Act of 1944, the local authorities have been in the ascendant. As Alan Weeks shows in his careful account of the spread of comprehensive schooling, successive governments have been largely impotent to speed up or slow down the gradual transformation of the system from selective to comprehensive. Where they have recently been powerful, it has been through the exercise of general financial powers over local expenditure, culminating in recent years in rate-capping. But the decline in rate-support grant had, even before this, effectively forced local authorities to cut education expenditure, although leaving it to each of them to decide exactly where the cuts should fall.

In *Education in Recession*, Eric Hewton shows how painful such a process has been, with the demands of education pitted against those of other services and with intense local resistance to school closures. Government has often made the latter process more difficult, but only very recently, over the pay of teachers and over the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), has the centre taken direct control. And TVEI exemplifies the

second area of conflict: who should control what is taught in schools? Here there are three protagonists: central government increasingly urges the need for a national curriculum; local governments produce their own variations in the form of core curricula; while the teachers have to cope with both, complaining bitterly and rightly that, if the experience of the introduction of the General Certificate of Secondary Education is a model, not enough money will be provided for them to teach any new curriculum.

On the sidelines, various pressure groups argue for and against new subjects, like the Peace Studies against which Roger Scruton rails in his contribution to Dennis O'Keefe's *The Wayward Curriculum*, or the anti-racist initiatives which have recently caused such controversy in Brent. Despite the sub-title of O'Keefe's book, there is little evidence that parents are very concerned about such new enthusiasms of teachers; they worry more about how well the teachers communicate whatever it is that they have chosen to teach.

Where parents are much more concerned is in the third area of conflict, over the internal organization of schools. Here there are two levels of dispute: the first, involving government, local authorities and parents, concerns the retention or abolition of selective secondary schools, the battle for comprehensives. The second, involving teachers, parents and, to some extent, local authorities, is about streaming, setting and all the other ways by which children are sorted within the school and set on tracks which lead them to the outside world and their ultimate careers. It is in this area that debate is most ideological, least concerned with party political struggle, and in which the division between egalitarians and elitists is shown at its starkest.

One could go on. Other players include the various local examination boards, the churches hanging grimly on to their voluntary-aided status, the universities and polytechnics with their demands for particular kinds of sixth-form education, employers seeking alternative, or simultaneously, trained manpower, while open-minded, free-thinking innovators, like the fringes of the system the private schools, continue to exert a powerful fascination, seen either as the last saviours of freedom or as a central mechanism in the preservation of the English class structure. New players, and new conflicts, constantly emerge; the debate over tertiary colleges or comprehensive sixth forms is but one that has flared up recently, although, as Weeks shows, some have existed for years.

In all these conflicts, allegiances and alliances constantly shift. At present, the teachers and local authorities are on the defensive, while central government simultaneously takes central control and brands the flag of ultimate localism, parental power. Whether this is more than populism is difficult to tell. In any case, it seems to confuse the role of parents as guardians of their own children with that of parents as citizens who have an interest in educating future citizens. Most parents are naturally and deeply concerned with the education of seven-year-olds when their child is that age or even uninterested when the child is one or two years older; then their role becomes that of the disinterested citizen, the past parent, and it is not clear why that status should gain them the right to control the syllabus of the next generation of seven-year-olds.

It is no wonder that, given all these controversies and pressures, Frank E. Huggett set out in *Teachers* merely to describe a few teachers and their views. He knew that "it was going to be impossible to find representative teachers (if, indeed, they do exist)". He would have found it just as difficult to find "representative schools". Schools in Britain range from heavily streamed comprehensive to unstreamed private schools, from schools for the five to eleven-year-olds to schools for the five to nine and eleven to fourteen-year-olds, from schools with 95 per cent Beagall parents to schools where no immigrant child has ever been seen. Some private schools are still teaching Latin to seven-year-olds, while in some comprehensives the teaching of any language is a rarity.

Is this variety surprising? As Jeannie Oakes shows in *Keeping Track: How schools structure inequality*, even in the United States, which seems to outsiders and even, she says, to most Americans, to have a much more uniform system, this appearance is highly deceptive. Different schools adopt very different styles of teaching common curricula and the result is that different pupils have very disparate experiences of school. It is difficult, in any case, to envisage how uniformity could be achieved without turning Her Majesty's Inspectorate into a mammoth force, some kind of thought police running the schools of Britain and conducting random tests in classrooms.

More seriously, it seems likely that, despite the apparent variety of provision and the conflicts about it, there are broad movements in educational thought and practice which sweep over the system and affect most schools, whatever their ostensible aims and organization. Ira Shor, in *Cultural Wars*, is concerned with just such movements in the United States where, within a somewhat different organizational and financial structure and, apparently, even less overt central control than in Britain, there have been major changes within the past twenty years in the preoccupations of schools. Shor identifies four movements, those for career education, "back-to-basics", "excellence" and "high tech", all of which uncannily pre-date similar differences in Britain. As he also shows, plans for differential payments for teachers, the so-called "master teacher" programme, were also advanced and, again, were precursors for teacher assessments and similar government concerns in Britain today.

Shor's book is flawed in two ways; first, it is overtly and irritatingly polemical. Second, although in theory a work of educational history, it is historical in its assumption that depression is likely to be a permanent state for the American economy. Shor sees economic crisis as a stimulus both to the various conservative waves which he describes and also to what he wishes to see in the future, a transition to a state in which "learning can approach student alienation, transforming sullen disregard into passionate discourse. That changing or resistance to empowerment points to a society without war or inequality."

Despite the parallels which a British reader is bound to draw, both Shor and Oakes are discussing an educational system in the United States which is fundamentally different from that in Britain. It is based upon an ideal of egalitarianism and of education as a vehicle for opportunity. As such, it is distinct from a sys-

tem which is still half-hearted about equality, still yearning for the elitism of grammar schools and the Oxbridge model of higher education.

Despite its ideals the American vision is flawed in practice. The control of the school boards, responsive to parent voters, can lead to demoralized teachers bound to a strictly defined syllabus, to censorship of books and to undue deference to parental prejudice. (My own children were once taught in a school, thirty miles from San Francisco, in which homosexuality could not be mentioned but in which teachers were frightened to condemn drug-taking.) In addition, as Oakes shows, egalitarianism may not operate. Her book is about "tracking", the equivalent of streaming, the act of institutions and practices which sort children into groups based, in theory, on ability. Once sorted, and in defiance of an ethos which insists that all children should have access to the same subjects and enjoy the same treatment of them, the children are locked into their tracks; they find it difficult if not impossible to break out. Oakes shows how blacks and girls are disproportionately selected for the lower tracks.

In the United States, however, the ideal of egalitarianism does survive in a system which gives plenty of second chances. Children can repeat years, even drop out and return to high school, take college education in small segments, return to complete their course after working and transfer their credits from place to place. Far more than in Britain, the idea of education through life is powerful, aided by a system which, although varying very much from district to district, still has a common core. Children and young people are not expected to jump through a hoop at a particular age or be excluded forever from the system. It is the concept of the second chance that is noticeably and revealingly absent from the latest plans for change in the British educational system. For once, both Conservative and Labour agree on the need for a national curriculum, a common core of subjects that will be taught to all children. Just what should be in that common core is, as yet, ill-defined. Maths and English, certainly, a language and some science, but after that the arguments begin. Computers usually figure; most Conservatives are keen on religion and on the history of the nation, while George Walden, the Minister for

Available in March A New Series from Macmillan Education

Women Writers Edited by Eva Figes and Adele King

In the past the peculiar position of being a woman writer in a male-dominated society has been largely ignored, and this has affected readings of women's work. This series is designed to help in a serious reassessment of women's writing on its own terms.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE
by Pauline Nestor
176pp 186x123 mm
Hardback £16.00
Paperback £4.95

FANNY BURNEY
by Judy Simons
192pp 183x123 mm
Hardback £16.00
Paperback £4.95

CHRISTINA STEAD
by Diana Brydon
176pp 183x123 mm
Hardback £16.00
Paperback £4.95

SYLVIA PLATH
by Susan Bassnett
192pp 186x123 mm
Hardback £16.00
Paperback £4.95

Further titles in preparation.

For further information, please write to
Macmillan Education, Houndmills, Basingstoke,
Hants. RG21 2XS.

Higher Education, lauds Latin. All round the country, schools juggle with the claims of Geography, Biology, Art, Music, Technology, let alone Social Studies, Politics and all the other subjects which rouse the ire of O'Keefe and his contributors.

Opinions differ, also, on how the national curriculum should be brought about. Flushed with his success over teachers' pay, Kenneth Baker seems about to impose it and, at the same time, to reduce the role of local authorities in education as a whole. Giles Radice, for Labour, on the other hand, speaks of a national education council, with employers, local authorities, parents, teachers and all. Teachers and local authorities, busy with their own core curricula, may prefer local autonomy. But why do we need a national curriculum? Aside from the cynical answer - to give the Secretary of State for Education something to do - two answers are to the fore: first, to improve quality, and second, to serve the need of the economy for a literate and numerate population. No one can, or should, argue against the need for quality in education. But it is facile to assume either that quality is absent today, or that it will certainly come from a national curriculum. Despite the much-heralded crisis in English education, quality as measured by success in public examinations has consistently risen without any evidence that those examinations have become easier; far more children succeed today than in the age of the grammar schools, and sixth forms in popular comprehensive and tertiary colleges are flooded with applications from children at public schools.

It is possible that quality would increase faster with a national curriculum. It is also possible that it would stifle initiative, demoralize teachers and enormously reduce variety within the system, a variety and flexibility which Conservatives praise when defending private schools but mysteriously dislike when they find them in the state system. Similar problems arise with the second justification for a national curriculum. Of course, in their own interests and in those of the country as a whole, we need

children to be literate and numerate. We also, if employers are to be heeded, need them to be innovative, lateral thinkers with a broad knowledge of many fields rather than the products of narrow specialism. Why should these qualities be developed by a system which removes the ability of teachers to respond to local needs or local problems?

Most problematic, however, is the question of national standards. It seems to be assumed that a national curriculum must be accompa-

nied by a system of national monitoring, in which the progress of children is constantly assessed. Kenneth Baker has even begun to talk of benchmark tests for all children at the ages of seven, nine, eleven and fourteen, in addition to the existing examinations at sixteen and eighteen. He hopes, he told the Young Conservatives conference, that such a system will revive some of the traditional standards nourished in the grammar schools, standards which he also hopes to see in his new City

Technology Colleges. The most notable standard of the grammar schools, was, however, elitism based on selection. Taking only a small segment of the ability range, they yet managed to erect hierarchies and to induce a sense of failure, not only among those who had failed to enter them but also among those who were relegated to the C-stream within them. As a result, the selective grammar school system failed most of the nation. In addition, selection on a single day at the age of eleven ignored the different pace at which children develop; it was thus hitherto cruel and inefficient. The great danger of a national curriculum with graded tests is that it will replicate selection at eleven, but with successive selection instead at seven, nine, eleven and fourteen. As Jerome Oates shows, such testing will almost inevitably be followed by a division into streams from which children cannot easily escape.

Britain does not need more selection. The comprehensive schools have provided routes to academic and career success for many who would previously have been regarded as failures, precisely because their structure allows children to develop at different rates. Comprehensive sixth forms, incorporating courses for the Certificate in Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE), O level retakes and technical courses along with the traditional A levels, have done the same. Birkbeck and the Open University graduate thousands of students who were failed by the traditional selective system.

The balance of power in the first area of conflict has now shifted towards the centre. But it would be tragic if, in the course of a power struggle between the Secretary of State and the local authorities, with an election looming, the interests of generations of children were to be damaged by elitist maneuvering as the pursuit of quality. Years of selection and of deference to those who made through the hoops have left their mark on a society which has never really believed in equality of opportunity or of outcome; quality is too easily confused with the interests of the few.



A detail from Martin Mayer's photograph of a class at St Luke's First School, Brighton.

Attacking the attackers

Alan Ryan

FRANK PALMER (Editor)
Anti-Racism: An assault on education and value
210pp. Sberwood. £9.95.
0907671268

Anti-Racism is a much needed little collection of essays. We are in need of a calm look at the subjects it tackles: is Britain a "racist" society? Is it right to use the education system as a means of "social engineering"? Where does the line fall between harmless preference and illicit prejudice? How far can we, or ought we, to treat all cultures as equally valid?

Whatever else this book is, it is not that calm look. Frank Palmer generously credits Roger Scruton with the idea of the collection, and the prevailing tone is much what readers of Professor Scruton's column in *The Times* have come

to expect. Professor Antony Flew starts off the proceedings by drawing a number of useful, if rather obvious, distinctions - between race and culture, equal opportunity and equal outcome and so on. He points out, as do several other contributors, that a concern for justice, in the sense of a concern that people should not be disadvantaged for irrelevant reasons, is light-years away from the sloppy kind of cultural relativism which supposes that all cultures are "equally valid". "Valid for what?" Professor Flew rightly asks. Some languages, some habits of thought, some life-styles, are very much better at, say, promoting intellectual precision or scientific inquiry than others. Quite what cultural constraints limit or promote economic performance under what conditions is no doubt a matter of sociological controversy; the one truly incredible claim is that they are "all equal".

As he so often does, Flew spoils the effect by launching into a diatribe against the "neo-Marxist" beliefs and aspirations of "anti-racists". Any suggestion that there might be a connection between the economic interests of employers and racial antagonisms within the working class provokes shrieks of political as well as intellectual anguish. In the light of the racism of Idi Amin, the racial snobishness of China, the antisemitism of the Soviet government and a great deal else, it would be exceedingly hard to argue that racism is intrinsically or essentially a "capitalist" phenomenon. Whether that point is best made with quite the vehemence Flew brings to it is another matter.

Several of the contributors get rather heated about the same small sample of material - the Swann Report, *Education for All* (1985), a pamphlet on *Education for Equality* (1983) put out by the Berkshire Education Committee, and some pamphlets issued by the Inner London Education Authority. It is hard to believe that educational standards throughout the country will be severely damaged by them as the contributors to this collection suppose. Government meanness and local disorganization seem more likely to destroy education in Brent, or in rural Berkshire, than the other

hand, the sillinesses they extract from what they have been reading are so extravagant that it is hard not to sympathize with some of their complaints.

Baroness Cox gets justifiably hot under the collar about IEA's teaching pack on Auschwitz. This unlovely document invites teachers to draw "links to today" by suggesting parallels between the Nazi regime and "the denial of human rights in recent trade union legislation", which is not so much far-fetched as morally lunatic. But Lady Cox herself is less than fair to the other side, too. When the teaching pack insists that not all Germans were responsible for Auschwitz, any more than all blacks are for Idi Amin, "or even all British for the Falklands War", she complains that this is tantamount to inciting teachers to accuse our soldiers of murder. Yet the point surely is just to jolt the imagination; many Argentinians think that their territory is illegally occupied. They can hardly think that it is self-evident that the British task force was engaged in a wholly legitimate war. The much-maligned teaching pack tries to point out that even if you side with the Argentine view, you ought not to blame "the British"; as if each and every Briton was committed to doing down any and every Argentine - a proposition to which Lady Cox would surely assent.

One way and another *Anti-Racism* is depressing. Its contributors profess an attachment to justice, equal access and cultural variety. But they never worry about the difficulties which lurk in their own positions. An obvious one is the extent to which one accepts that education ought to aim to integrate everyone into the same society. There are clearly two very different views to be held - the first, to the effect that assimilation is the great goal, and if Muslim parents in Bradford impede the education of their daughters they must be educated, no matter what the affront to their religious convictions; the second, to the effect that society ought to protect the rights of different cultures, so that the educational handicaps suffered by women in Islamic cultures have to be accepted at the price they pay for preserving

the tradition.

Ray Honeyford has elsewhere argued strongly for protecting the rights of individual children against the religious prejudice of their parents, the local mullahs or missionaries here, alas, he contributes a not very interesting essay on the rhetorical excesses of "anti-racist" campaigners, when it would have been more compelling to see what he made of Simon Pearce's attack on the whole idea of employing education as an engine of social change in his contribution on "Swann and the Spirit of the Age".

Several contributors fulminate against those who think that Britain is a "racist" society. They are plainly right to defend the man in the street against any suggestion that he deserves himself to be deliberately doing down Indian, Chinese or Jamaican immigrants. They do not, however, do anything to dispel the anxieties of those who fear that the cumulative effect of native British prejudice and - in particular - black disadvantage may create something as unpleasant as a truly "racist" society would create. They are, for the most part, as narrowly obsessed by a few left-wing intellectuals and their works as intellectuals of the left tend to be about right-wing intellectuals and theirs. In consequence, they are so busy panicking about Dr A. Silvanus's *Fanbush* diatribes against all and every aspect of contemporary Britain that they have no time or energy to consider whether some response other than "back to the larder" is needed. Self-proclaimed defenders of intellectual values ought to be able to do better than that.

In *Promises and Pleasures*, TV's seven-part television series on postwar English education, Stuart MacLure, Editor of *The Times Educational Supplement*, presents his personal survey of the way in which educational policy has developed since the Butler Act of 1944, interviewing, among others, Neil Kinnock, Kenneth Baker and Shirley Williams. An accompanying booklet is available from *Promises and Pleasures*, PO Box 123, Southampton SO9 7HH.

Reflecting on the word

C. Brian Cox

SUZANNE DE CASTELL, ALLAN LUKE AND KIERAN EGAN (Editors)
The Written Word: Literacy in transition
197pp. Oxford University Press. £20.
019 8730684

This collection of eighteen articles on the nature, history and pedagogy of literacy discusses why educational research has had so little influence on national policies. On major controversial issues it has been unusual for researchers to agree, or for any set of ideas to establish permanent authority. Government decisions have been dictated by fashion - for progressive or back-to-basics campaigns - led by ambitious politicians and journalists.

Research on literacy enters such complex areas that only tentative results are possible. If you set up an experiment on the success or failure of different teaching techniques, how do you quantify the influence of parents, the quality of the teachers, or the effect of social background? Ingenious solutions have been proposed, but they can always be challenged. When newspaper headlines claim that research has proved that progressive or traditional methods work best, a few months later a

new piece of research will demonstrate the opposite.

Researchers themselves often allow their own ideological commitments to colour their work. Because literacy instruction inevitably takes place in a context of values, it always provokes emotional responses. In this collection of essays, based on a seminar at Simon Fraser University, the contributors often disagree on fundamentals, even on the value of literacy itself. An illuminating essay by Suzanne de Castell and Allan Luke draws attention to three concepts of literacy which contend for dominance in North American and British schools: the classical, the progressive and the technocratic.

In the late nineteenth century the classical model of literacy served an ideal of high culture, supported by study of exemplary texts such as the Bible and the Classics. Emphasis on mental discipline, on drill and rules and the three Rs, underpinned conservative ideals of cultural continuity and political order.

This classical model was challenged in the 1920s in the United States and in the 1960s in Britain by a progressive ideology based largely on the work of John Dewey. The classroom became a place for the development of equality and social exchange rather than authority and imitation. Whereas classical literacy was based on the exemplary text, progressives focused on questions of instructional method and social

use. In creative writing, students were expected to express their own ideas and experiences rather than to reproduce literary styles.

The technocratic model has been increasingly dominant in recent years, with a proliferation, particularly in North America, of courses on business writing, science writing, report writing, etc. De Castell and Luke argue strongly that technocratic education is the worst model, reducing literacy to a blind superficiality of middle-class conservatism. The technocrats criticize the progressivism for its indulgence and low standards unsuited to the needs of work, and for their subversive, left-wing ideology. The progressives claim the classicists repress the individuality of students in the service of a conformist, hierarchical society. As such warfare continues in schools it is not surprising that parents become anxious and bewildered.

Among all these controversies, what hope is there for the Kingman Committee on English, set up in January in Britain by Kenneth Baker, the Secretary of State? The Committee's terms of reference are to recommend a "model" of the English language, whether spoken or written, which would be used in the training of teachers and to establish "principles which should guide teachers on how far and in what ways the model should be made explicit to pupils, to make them conscious of how language is used in a range of contexts".

This collection of essays does offer some hope for consensus. The most helpful piece is Michael L. Herriman's "Metalinguistic awareness and the growth of literacy", in which he proposes that "encouragement of children's awareness of language structure and function will contribute to the emergence of literacy". Until the 1960s there was widespread agreement among research studies that the teaching of formal grammar had a negligible, or, because it replaces some instruction and practice in composition, even a harmful effect in the development of writing skills. In recent years doubts have been thrown on this research,

which in any case limited itself to the kind of Renaissance grammar taught in schools before 1960. It is now recognized that the child's capacity to step aside from the word and think about it as an object in itself is an essential element in the development of high standards of literacy. As a student seeks to write precisely, his choice of words, constructions, tone and emphasis are conscious and planned ahead, unlike in speech, which is mostly spontaneous. The process of planning in writing is basically of reflecting on language and the suitability of its forms for the expression of one's ideas. Unless the teacher is aware of the possible problems and can talk with the student about them, using metalanguage terms such as "word", "sentence" or "proposition", then it is unlikely much progress will be made.

Many of the contributors agree that the growth of language awareness must take place largely through the child's own practice of writing. The volume ends with persuasive articles by Richard M. Coe and Michael C. Flanigan, which offer detailed advice on classroom techniques. Coe advocates a "process" approach, for it is only by actively using concepts they have studied that students make these concepts their own. Both Coe and Flanigan are concerned that the teacher should not just grade written work, but actively advise and participate in revision and redrafting. In this activity language awareness is essential for progress, but the linguistic "model" is learnt not simply by instruction in abstract definitions but in the process of writing.

These articles are particularly valuable because they suggest that teachers who disagree on ideological grounds might reach some degree of consensus on what is most helpful to children in the classroom. We need to devise a model of language teaching which instructs children in appropriate skills for work, encourages their ability to communicate and to write creatively, and introduces them to the best in literary tradition. This should not prove impossible.

The Pierpont Morgan Library is seeking a Director.

Nominations and applications may be addressed to
Box 647,
New York, NY 10185.

The Pierpont Morgan Library is an equal opportunity employer.

Of the Earth

Hearing the lift ascending, voices on the stairs, a short-lived quarrel, the old dog vacates her blanket and the contemplation of another world, and grudgingly goes to the door to express an opinion. She embraces sublimity, but without conviction.

PIOTR SOMMER
(Translated from the Polish by the author and D. J. Enright)

only well after the fact that Congress can catch up with the lawlessness of any President's White House staff.

Because all his hopes for domestic liberalism depend on a powerful and efficient executive, Schlesinger has no suggestions for dealing with irresponsible presidential conduct, and he ends up by demanding that Presidents acquire a split personality, one for use at home and quite a different one for foreign affairs. In his domestic liberalism Schlesinger wants a morally self-assured, active President, determined to fulfil the promise of American life. There is to be freedom and prosperity and a government led by men of democratic vision who can and will again inspire the nation. In foreign policy, however, all these democratic moral urges must be sternly repressed. Even the pursuit of human rights has to give way to the national interest, though he grudgingly admits that many a potential victim in Latin America came to thank Jimmy Carter, who is the one Democratic President for whom he has no use.

Schlesinger's beliefs here are again grounded in a version of tradition. The Founding Fathers did not believe that human nature in America was any better than in the rest of the world and that the moral powers of its people in dealing with other states were in any way superior to those of the rest of the international world. Puritans and later evangelical Protestants might have dreamed of completing the Reformation, but the men of 1787 were all realists. If they harboured moral aspirations they were like those of Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's and Madison's upright Secretary of the Treasury, who told America firmly that it could promote good government abroad only by setting an example at home of what democratic government could be at its best. It had no "manifest destiny" to spread its own power, customs and preferences to the rest of the world, least of all to its Spanish neighbours. In its dealings with other nations, America has no mission to reform tyrants, liberate the oppressed or interfere with other governments, however murderous they might be. No zeal and no crusades, at least not if they are proposed by John Foster Dulles and Ronald Reagan. Instead, America is to cultivate a tough pragmatism.

How a democratic public with the kind of liberal ethos that Schlesinger calls for is to turn its principles off like a tap when dealing with other peoples and countries (from which quite often they or their ancestors have come) is not clear. Nor is it obvious that liberalism can do without some sense of duty to humanity in general and to the promotion of a minimally decent international order. It is an argument to quote Reinhold Niebuhr's sin-centred theology as a restraint upon an excessive faith in our power to do good abroad. For that, the con-

sequences and character of policies based on Niebuhr's outlook would have to be described and judged. After twenty-five years of foreign policies which were not inspired by moralistic urges and were justified in the language of necessity and national interest, it is difficult to see what difference an ironic mindset at any time would have made to America's present position in the world. What would now be different? Realism would certainly not have prevented the Bay of Pigs or Vietnam, the achievements of the most overtly and self-consciously realistic of recent Presidents, Kennedy. The advantages of calculation and self-restraint are very great for all political action, but they are not all that is required for success. "Realism", here, seems to mean no more than that American politicians should not make statements that infuriate the Russians unnecessarily and that anti-communism was that end like Vietnam are to be avoided. This is a trivial point unless it refers not only to the vocabulary of foreign affairs, but to the political language and disposition of contemporary Americans in general. If one would like to see less hypocrisy and more simplicity and restraint in contemporary public discourse and manners, then one might deplore moralistic hot air to some purpose, but neo-Calvinist platitudes will not bring America back to the ways of the Founders or to a world in which the national interest was a controversial, but not a meaningless, notion.

It seems evident to Schlesinger that the national interest itself implies some form of rational and calculable conduct. Its real opponents are not, in his view, democratic politics and public opinion, but ideology. The question one might ask, however, is whether apart from the isolationism which was wholly in keeping with America's early weakness and geographical remoteness, there ever was a national interest that could determine foreign policies. Given that since the War of 1812 neither its territorial integrity nor its system of government has been under any real physical threat, what is America's national interest, except the perception of its relative standing among the other powers of the world? Has any American statesman ever ignored that? Even the most moralistic among them did not disregard the national interest, so understood. American liberals have denounced moralism for thirty-odd years now, not to offer the public a better foreign policy, but as a ritual of self-flagellation, induced by the realization that their traditional commitment to Wilsonian principles was an inadequate response to European politics after the First World War, and that all the hopes associated with FDR's last years were false.

In fact, Schlesinger knows perfectly well that not all the misfortunes of the years since the

Second World War are America's fault. In a fiery chapter on the origins of the Cold War, he easily takes apart the Open Door theory of William Appleman Williams which claims that America's modern foreign policies were all an imperialist plot to promote its economic expansion abroad. This radical revisionism founders on the obvious fact that the United States had virtually no economic interests to defend in Eastern Europe. However, the onset of the Cold War was not just a matter of Russian aggression, either, according to Schlesinger; there was a failure of communication on both sides. Moreover, though he does not share their moral revulsion, his nostalgia is in some ways not altogether remote from the radicals' myth of an early pure, civic, pre-capitalist, republican and virtuous America. For him, too, America is a promise that was made long ago, and in its beginning was also its end.

Into the age of the muckraker

Kenneth O. Morgan

THOMAS C. LEONARD

The Power of the Press: The birth of American political reporting
273pp. Oxford University Press. £20.
0 19 5037197

The power of the American pressman has become legendary in the modern political history of the United States. Great proprietors from Hearst and Pulitzer downwards, editors ranging from Godkin of the *New York Nation* to William Allen White in the humble *Emporia Gazette* in deepest Kansas, muckraking reporters from Lincoln Steffens at the turn of the century down to Bernstein and Woodward in our own time, have (at least allegedly) brought the mightiest of Senators and even Presidents to their knees. Press columnists like Walter Lippmann and James "Scotty" Reston have enjoyed an esteem seldom known among political commentators in Britain. But is the received wisdom correct? Historically, the late Stephen Koss used to argue, the political press has been notably more central to the political culture of modern Britain (at least to 1939) than of America. The structure and impact of the American press is complicated and it requires close examination.

Light is shed on this important theme by Thomas Leonard's book, *The Power of the Press*. Based on much detailed research into periodical and newspaper literature from colonial times down to the First World War, it explores the interaction of reporting and the political process to earlier American history. By the turn of the present century, with the emergence of people like Steffens, Brand Whitlock and David Graham Phillips, the place of political reporting within a cohesive nationwide democracy was fully established. American journalism, as Leonard sees it, had finally come of age after a century and a half of painful struggle.

In some ways, this book is unsatisfactory. It is too brief, hardly allowing the author to develop major elements in his theme. It is not clear why it should stop with Woodrow Wilson's presidency. At the very least, the author should have measured his criticisms that political reporting discouraged political participation and induced mass apathy, against the renewed political involvement of the New Deal era, and the role of key journalists like Ernest Lindley, Marquis Childs and Stuart Chase during that period. In his critique of the Progressive muckrakers, Leonard takes an unduly narrow and allusive view of aspects of the story. Nevertheless, his book is an intelligent, well-written and documented account of a major facet of the American political experience, especially for the Gilded Age.

Until the Civil War, the role of the American political reporter was a consistently difficult one. In colonial times, printers and publishers, writing under Cotton Mather's curse on their ungodly operations, struggled for recognition, even less effectively than did their British counterparts. During the Revolution years of the 1760s and 70s, if it is true, newspapers found a new sense of power, chronicling the intrigues of the English government, and kindling a

There is no reason to be ungrateful for a book that reminds us forcefully of the enduring worth of America's established institutions. Even those who were for so long excluded from their benefits, and those who still do not have their fair share, can yet on this account put their hopes in the Constitution. A liberalist that is, however, so completely engrossed in the Presidency and in high policy is both limited and limited. Mesmerized by FDR, the old New Deal of liberals never looked at any other part of the political life of the American people. And though their devotion to the Constitution is genuine, their pragmatism never had any fixed bounds in either domestic or foreign policy. Those are certainly the mental habits of the successful, but they will not bring about the revival of the reforming democratic energy that Schlesinger and every American liberal hope for.

sense of American patriotism. But the early decades of the new republic again found the press circumscribed, with Congress placing every obstacle in the way of reporting. Major speeches by Jefferson, Clay or Webster were not properly reported. Local politicians and party hacks forced political reporting into new constraints. (Lincoln was unusual in the 1850s in insisting that his debating speeches against Douglas be reported in detail and circulated nationwide. He was indeed a calculating man.)

The great change came with the explosive growth of political involvement after 1865. Attacks in *Harper's* and the *New York Times*, exposing the Tweed ring in New York, backed up by Thomas Nast's cartoons, created a new awareness of the influence of the press in working out corruption in high places, with partisan zeal and populist passion intertwined.

The social concern with poverty and crime in American cities in the 1880s inspired investigative reporters like Jacob Riis, to be followed in the 1890s by a new college-trained generation of journalists—a theme not explored by Leonard—men far removed from the "dead-ends, deadbeats and bummers" of the old-style city press. Patronized by sophisticated proprietors like Pulitzer, the transition from local to national reporting was largely complete.

In the first decade of the new century, Steffens's exposure of the graft and misgovernment of St Louis and other cities defined and dominated public debate. Cities now quaked up to have their scandals exposed by competitively readable muckraking reporters. Whitlock turned his fury on the penal system, Brand Baker on the South, Thomas Lawson on high finance and the insurance companies, Sinclair on labour relations and poisoned food. Phillips depleted the Senate as peopled by nameless criminals guilty of treason. Mr Dooley complained that while he had once feared visits from burglars, he now trembled at a nocturnal visitation from the President of the First National Bank. In the end, it all became too frenzied. Teddy Roosevelt's contemptuous dismissal of the "man with the muckraker", with his eyes riveted on the dung on the floor, struck a congenial chord. For all that, by the time of Wilson's presidency, the political press had reshaped and redefined half the style and content of American politics.

Leonard's book is not a celebration of the role of the American political reporter. He condemns Steffens and his muckraking colleagues for generating an anti-urban, anti-civil ethos which bred contempt for the political process as such. He links the work of the muckrakers with the fall in voting during the Progressive era; and cites the "disgust" felt by a muckraker like Whitlock with American politics as a whole. But he fails to cover other aspects of the period, including the growth of American society, the explosive expansion of its cities, and the huge immigration from Europe, which left the parties, like most other institutions, beleaguered. Leonard, also, unduly emphasizes the impact of Steffens; not all Progressives eoded up as anti-democratic apostles of Lenin, Mussolini and a future that worked. For all their limitations, however, the political reporters played a heroic, albeit role, as educators, civilizers and humanists.

An explosive embrace

A. S. Byatt

BRIGID BROPHY
Baroque 'n' Roll and Other Essays
172pp. Hamish Hamilton. £10.95.
0 241 120373

The English perceive Brigid Brophy as a maverick. They do not know where to have her. She writes against our traditions of understatement and mild social comment. Her novels are witty and artificial, and irritate the tidy categorizer, since they resemble each other only in the intellectual sensuality of their construction. Her enthusiasms are also disparate, but have in common a tendency to combine precision of expression, a certain extravagance, and formal or logical rigour pushed as far as it will decently go. Shaw, Wilde, Mozart, Jane Austen, Purcell, Fribank, the vegetarian cause, the art of lawn tennis, the baroque in its multitude of forms. She is, of course, not an English humorist but a member of that Celtic school in which, as she points out, Shaw and Wilde were briefly (and uneasily) linked. She is an Irish wit, and also a remorseless moralist.

Baroque 'n' Roll gathers up various essays: offering new insights into *Edwin Drood* and *As You Like It*, praising Freud and Navratilova, making us appallingly sensible of the pain we cause to our fellow-creatures, fish. The title essay, last in the book, is a six-part demonstration or definition (like Merrell's *Definition of Love*) of what she means by baroque. The essay itself is an example of the formal movements it attempts to define. It opens with the assertion that "form is constant throughout the arts" and examines the order and irregularities of poetry (Marvell, metaphysical verse, Milton), sculpture (Bernini), painting (a marvelous disquisition on Titian's *Aetion* paintings and their possible influence on Shakespeare), music (Purcell and Dryden) and architecture. "A structure can be transposed from one art into another", Brophy says, and argues that Marvell's poem "To His Coy Mistress" resembles an Aristotelian syllogism, that English explores relationships through metaphor and Greek through the modulations of its very syntax. (Tennis, too, is a baroque form: it has its geometry, its orderly sequence of rules and scores, its asymmetrical, dissimilar, extravagant gestures. John McEnroe is, "if not an

angel at least a baroque putta".) Perhaps the centre of this complex construction is the Bernini sculpture of Saint Teresa, ecstatically and ambivalently pierced by the angel. "Baroque", Brophy tells us, "is an open, sometimes an explosive embrace of contradictions and appositions, intellectual and of feeling". She goes on:

In sculpture, as often in architecture, the quintessential substance of the baroque is marble, a material likely, like some types of cheese, to be veined by a countercolour. When it is pure white, it can, at the working of a master, simulate the various softnesses of hair, lace and flesh, and yet it remains hard and cold. A natural rendering of the baroque ambivalence, it renders flesh at once more desirable and in the clutch of *rigor mortis*.

Which brings us to Brophy's account of the invasion of her own life by the progressive disabling of multiple sclerosis. These autobiographical pages have a matter-of-fact authority and a kind of nakedness not found elsewhere in the book. They are also wholly gripping as narrative: her situation is terrible, and yet she makes us curious about the detail of her experi-



Max Ernst's "Répétitions" is reproduced here from Max Ernst: *Beyond Surrealism: a retrospective of the artist's books and prints*, edited by Robert Rauschenberg (192pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £13.50. 0 19 504990 X).

Arousing the appetite

G. P. Butler

MICHAEL HAMBURGER

After the Second Flood: Essays on post-war German literature
286pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £16.95.
0 856 35636 0

Unlike its predecessor, *A Proliferation of Prophets* (1983), which focused on German literature from Nietzsche to the Second World War and was "largely a collection of existing essays", Michael Hamburger's latest book is purpose-built: "the pieces I had written on specific authors or works proved too miscellaneous to make anything like a coherent study." In the event, the eleven essays now assembled as *After the Second Flood* do not quite add up to one either. But they constitute a rich and stimulating volume, one which emphasizes yet again that a serious involvement with literature takes time. For all his talents and assiduity, Hamburger could hardly have built up the remarkable range of expertise and insights which is on display here had he remained in thrall to a university.

The display is necessarily selective but strangely defective. Hamburger is aiming to address "the common", "general" but literate reader; and therefore, although there can be little doubt that the aim is off target at times, he can scarcely be taken to task for "the almost total exclusion of 'secondary literature' announced in his preface. (Indeed if the treatment he makes out to a recent biography of Brecht is any guide, some of the pundits excluded might consider themselves lucky.) Nor in the circumstances would it be fair if more than a minority bewailed the fact that 'no bibliography' could be appended", or even

perhaps that the author's "preoccupation with poetry and with prose that has some of the density and concentration of poetry" effectively precludes a consideration of certain major literary achievements, notably various novels, which no student of the scene under scrutiny can afford to overlook. There will be justifiable disappointment, however, at Hamburger's disavowal that "writing for the theatre had to be closure that 'virtually left out', and this 'only because I am not a theatre-goer and do not consider myself competent to write about plays as theatre, rather than as literary texts'. Even 'as literary texts', plays indeed rarely feature in what then follows, and the results can be very peculiar: the coverage given to Peter Weiss or Dürrenmatt or Hochbut (*sic*), for instance, shows the attention paid to these dramatists' narrative work—for example, to Hochbut's *Elne Liebe in Deutschland*, which, apart from a passing reference to *Der Stellvertreter*, takes up the entire four-and-a-half pages he has been allocated—skews the reputations that they have earned.

What readers will gain from *After the Second Flood*, however, far outweighs the consequences of Hamburger's limitations ("ignorance, forgetfulness and blind spots..."). To take individual writers: the title essay or chapter—individual writers: the title essay or chapter—inter alia an admirably succinct introduction to Ernst Jünger and Doderer; Hamburger's special "preoccupation" and his unrivalled skills as a translator have resulted in masterly pieces or passages on Brecht's poetry (in "Towards Classicism: Brecht and his successors"), on Heidegger and Jandl (in "The Poetry of Enzensberger and Fried (in 'The Poetry of Survival') and on Gert Hofmann and Thomas Bernhard; and the chapter devoted to Grass ("A Prodigious Equipose"), though largely

confined to his early prose and poetry, up to 1969, is surely the most informative and perceptive assessment of its kind and scope so far.

Moreover, despite his avowed refusal or inability to "believe in" histories of literature, Hamburger has consistently borne his readers' needs in mind: to take account, for example, of post-war Germans' urgent ambition to recognize their recent past for what it was and cut their nation's villains and villainies down to size (in Chapter Two: "De-Demonization"); of the uprooting suffered during and since the Third Reich by so many writers and writers-to-be (in Chapter Six: "Displaced Persons"); and of the problems which have arisen for all and sundry from the contrasts between East and West Germany (in Chapter Nine: "Two Sides of a Wall").

After the Second Flood whets the appetite for more about the writing and writers that Hamburger, however expansive or concise, has treated less fully than guides otherwise preoccupied might think appropriate (a list which could include Andersch, Born, Fritsch, Hildesheimer, Jahn, Johnson, Siegfried Lenz, Arno Schmidt, Schnurre); also for more about—and for translations of—work which, like Paul Celan's, has been kept almost out of sight because it "demands a kind of minute attention which the nature and perspective of this study forbids"; and for more of Hamburger's sage enthusiasm, his acuity and plain speaking, his uncommonly dependable sense of style. Growing fear of "the Third Flood"—of the perhaps imminent destruction of our species and its habitat—in this collection, and its presenter, may make nonsense of such an appetite. But this in no way diminishes the feast of having aroused it.

Exhalations

Masolino d'Amico

ELÉMIRE ZOLLA

Aure: l'luoghi e i riti
179pp. Venice: Mantilio. L18,000.

"Aure" is the Italian plural of "aura", a Latin word, of course, an English word. The *OED* defines one of its meanings thus: "A subtle emanation or exhalation from any substance, e.g. the aroma of blood, the odour of flowers, etc." Thence "aureola", Latin for "halo", a faint but discernible irradiation of saintliness, or of some special virtue. The Romantics cherished the word, and were fond of looking for special moments or places which it could appropriately describe. Walter Pater's eagerness to burn always with a "hard, gemlike flame" (in order not to miss, say, that "tone on the hills or the sea" which may be "choicer than the rest") belongs in this awareness of revelations that can be discovered in a particular environment; an approach of this kind, however, lacks that shock of recognition of an archetype, which should connect the observer with the past of his own species. A happy inner life is, in Elémire Zolla's words, "a constant remembering of the meetings with auras in one's own experience, if one is an individual; in the community's life, if one is the scion of a race".

"Aure" has become an almost obsolete word in our own Western world. As Professor Zolla points out, "one lives among mass-produced people and things, that by definition irradiate nothing; subtle humiliations, inexorable flint-tongues extinguish places and people alike". Today's tourist-trampled Italy has lost nearly all the "auras" that used to attract the Northern young gentlemen on the run from their own countries. Progress has laid it waste. It is hard to imagine that a novel written today could contain a contemporary character like the terrorist in Henry James's *The Princess Casanovino*, who, visiting Venice on the eve of an assassination attempt, is converted by the "aura" of the surroundings, and rather than kill other people, takes his own life.

"Aure" are hard to come by, but Zolla finds that they have not wholly vanished from Italy. Drawing on his own experience, he describes, among other instances, a poetry competition in a village in Tuscany; the yearly gathering of "tarantolate" (women possessed by a devil associated with the bite of a spider) at Galatina; the famous "Valley of the Monsters" at Bomarzo, a Neoplatonic shrine conceived by Vicino Orsini and created between 1550 and 1573.

What is exceptional in the increasingly modernized Western world may, however, still be comparatively common elsewhere. If one wants to feel once more on holy ground—to feel that the atmosphere one is breathing is, as the Romans used to say, "genial"—one must travel to the Orient, where "unholy" places are still available. Zolla groups together the brief accounts of "auras" in Italy and Provence under the general heading "Foreword to the West". These form the Introduction to the core of his book, which contains a selection of the author's encounters with survivals of the past to Africa (Nubia and Cairo) and, especially, in the East (India, Bali, Iran, Israel, Singapore, Taiwan and Korea). The result is not a systematic treatise, but a highly stimulating set of privileged moments—or, as Zolla suggests, a discussion of archetypes—recollected in an engaging tranquillity, and buttressed by a vast but unobtrusive scholarship.

Zolla, who has elsewhere explored the traditions and the philosophy of the North American Indians, is convinced that man's culture was at one time one and the same all over the world, and that this culture was founded on a now largely forgotten understanding of man's true position in the universe. Whether he is reconciling Lucretius and Dante to the Tamil Nadi; visiting *kahakali* dances in Cochín, or a factory of nyruveddi remedies in Madras; describing *pedanto* techniques in Bali (a place so often visited by the Evil of the Times in the past, he argues with characteristic optimism, that it may well prove invincible once more, and survive the current invasion of holiday-makers), or Zoroastrian liturgy in Tehran, to read Zolla is pure intellectual pleasure.

Behind the lines

Lorna Sage

The editorial policy of the new *Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels*, due to be completed by the year 2000, has taken three years to agree and is likely to prove controversial, opting as it does for the first edition as base-text. Not that, as tyros might suppose, this is a matter of scholarly sloth: up to 1827 all Scott's manuscripts were transcribed before they went to the printer, in order to protect his anonymity; he also corrected proofs without reference to his own manuscript; so that the result is what Archie Turnbull, Secretary to the Edinburgh University Press, describes with relish as "A pig's breakfast". The editors haven't exactly gone for the cosy option, then. Nor has the Press, which is determined to produce a text that "will allow readers at the end of the twentieth century to share the excitement that the individual novels generated when they were first published". This, it turns out, involves an improbable and ingenious combination of new and old technologies.

Mr Turnbull had hoped to "capture" the whole first edition text by OCR (Optical Character Recognition) but the scanners of Oxford and Glasgow cannot accommodate hand-set type. Dr David Hewitt, the edit-in-chief, found that the machine kept stopping to query irregularities, and even produced misreadings of its own. So, with reluctance, they are keying it in the usual way, with editors (as is now becoming standard) generating text complete with typesetting commands. What is new and entirely original, however, is the input from Harry McIntosh, of Speedspools in Edinburgh, who has developed a software program that enables him to keyboard on a word-processor and to use the resulting electronic data to drive a monotype punch-unit and cast to produce hot metal type.

Mr McIntosh has been snapping up matrices from hot metal printers who have closed down over recent years, and has amassed a vast range

of typefaces. He produces specialist books on typesetting on his Amstrad; the Scott edition, though, will be his software's grandest application to date. As Mr Turnbull says with pride: "We are using the microchip to produce a dinosaur". The printed page will look rough and fresh in a way Scott hasn't for many a year. But will this improve his popularity south of the border? It won't be the Press's fault if it doesn't; in addition to the size and appearance of the typeface, the size of the page and the weight of the paper are being designed to produce "books that people can read in bed". It is, says Dr Hewitt modestly, "this human project" that dominates their thinking. The spoil-heaps of important textual variants thrown up by the editorial process will slumber safely on disc for posterity.

The Edinburgh Scott is, none the less, a costly project, backed by the university and (among others) the Bank of Scotland. Quite a different development in dask-top publishing is a new lease of life – indeed often a new life altogether – for the small academic imprint. Norvik Press, at my own university, East Anglia, is a good example: they've been producing *Scandinavica* ("an International Journal of Scandinavian Studies") for some time, and have now launched into business as book publishers, with a planned six titles a year, and a staff of three – Emeritus Professor James Macfarlane, Dr Janet Garton, and one secretary. They rather think they are in the vanguard in the university world, because of the combination of technical, scholarly and linguistic know-how. This has not only enabled them to set up with very modest grants from the university and from Norwegian, Swedish and Danish governments, but has also allowed them confidently to dispense with the "quality control" large academic publishers are supposed to exercise, and to break even on a print run of no more than 1,000 copies, which traditional firms cannot do.

The results, judging from their first two titles, *A Priest's Diary* by Sigbjørn Obstfelder, translated by James F. Macfarlane (102 pp. Paperback, £5.50, 1 870041 01 1) and *Skrindberg and Autobiography* by Michael Robinson (202 pp. Paperback, £9.75, 1 871141 00 3), are professional and convincing. So much so that they provoke apprehension; what if academics in other, less disciplined disciplines than Scandinavian Studies were to take up self-publishing in a big way? In English Studies? Or American Studies? Macfarlane and Garton are authorities in their field as well as software fanatics, but computer-literacy is spreading, and doesn't necessarily imply the other kind. (Orders and inquiries to Norvik Press, EUR/Order Dept., University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ; 40 per cent discount on books to personal Scandinavian subscribers.)

"Esperanto's Time has Come" exclaims a booklet by Professor Stanley Nisbet from Glasgow. Esperantists, often tempted to despair in the UK (which from an Esperantist's point of view is very much a Third World country, among the poorest, with no state or local authority help), were cheered up a good deal by the extraordinary mob of MPs and others who turned up to overcrowd their centenary sherry party at the House of Commons last week. Support now runs through the political alphabet from Leo Abns to Tim Yeo (who both sound as though they were christened in Esperanto), with 204 signed-up well-wishers, and any ill-wishers largely silent. Once upon a time – indeed, from the time of its Polish inventor L. L. Zamenhof – Esperanto was dangerously associated with the cause of world peace. But now no one expects the ending of the curse of Babel to produce any such apocalyptic consequences. Mrs Mary Austin (President, Esperanto-Asocio de Britujo) makes the point in person: she is Irish and has grown up with the knowledge that having a common language isn't the secret of peace – "In Ireland people have lived in conflict all their lives". This doesn't, though, quench one's enthusiasm for a truly "neutral" language, with no privileged native speakers, and no linguistic-imperialist guilt. Mrs Austin feels that nowadays many who come to her stay to learn; even the press, who used to treat the whole thing "in a negative or slightly mocking way", are being won round to provide free publicity. She attributes this to increasing awareness that Esperanto makes sense – though another possibility is that it is

partly because their press releases, once re-sembling proselytizing pamphlets from fundamentalists, now build in a measure of humour.

MPs, for instance, are provided with a handy glossary ("pompa", "bombasta", "fienca", "modera") on the back of a message from the Prime Minister which announces (can this be quite what she meant?) that "language is one of the greatest barriers to communication". And their solid recent achievements are the probable introduction of a GCSE qualification in Esperanto in schools, and a grant of £3 million from the Dutch government for research into the uses of Esperanto as a "bridge" language in computer-assisted translation in which currently spends around £90 million a year, it is claimed, in translations and interpretation). Centenary events will include *The Importance of Being Earnest* in translation at the Bloomsbury Theatre in July, and Esperanto Puccini and Judy, just to show that conflict can survive. (Further details from: Esperanto Centre, 14 Holland Park Avenue, London W11 4UP.)

Plans to appoint a new Literature Officer to the Arts Council (see this column for December 19, 1986) have gone interestingly awry. Tensions between the policies of *The Glory of the Garden* and the new Literature Officer seem to be sprouting like weeds, and a mole report that even choosing the interviewing committee caused headaches. Sir William Rees-Mogg and Luke Rittner were obviously there, as was Robert Woolf from the Literature Panel, but attempts at further balance were more difficult, and the Council needed several trials before fixing on James Berry (= one black poet) and Margaret Drabble (= one woman novelist). That done, there was the further problem of actually appointing someone to the advertised post, but this proved insuperable. Despite a shortlist which, rumour has it, included Professor Peter Levi, David Caute, Robert Stewart (the brains behind *The Glory*) and even one experienced literature officer, Lawrence Stagg from Eastern Arts, the Committee were unable to agree to an appointment. Doubtless it's difficult to find anyone who will fill the deprived Charles Osborne's shoes without being (this is obviously essential) at all like him. Apparently the post is to be advertised over again, when the interviewing committee may also be a touch reconstituted.

Letters

Britain and East Timor

Sir, – I commend Peter Carey for his review of Sir Ramos Horta's depressing history of East Timor (February 27), especially for his not shying from outlining the tremendous support Western democracies have lent to the ethnocidal Indonesian onslaught. One can only regret that he did not spend more space sketching, for his British readers, the extent of their country's role in this tragedy – the more solid recent achievements are the probable introduction of a GCSE qualification in Esperanto in schools, and a grant of £3 million from the Dutch government for research into the uses of Esperanto as a "bridge" language in computer-assisted translation in which currently spends around £90 million a year, it is claimed, in translations and interpretation). Centenary events will include *The Importance of Being Earnest* in translation at the Bloomsbury Theatre in July, and Esperanto Puccini and Judy, just to show that conflict can survive. (Further details from: Esperanto Centre, 14 Holland Park Avenue, London W11 4UP.)

'Road to Victory'

Sir, – With reference to Alistair Horne's review (February 13) of Volume Seven of the Churchill biography, I was of course flattered to be told that my account "was the first time that the information received as a result of Enigma has been so directly linked to the action taken upon it". Although I was able to provide several important examples of the effect of intercepted German messages on British policy, I followed in the main (as Ralph Erskine points out in his letter of February 27), though not exclusively, both the footsteps and the facts of F. H. Hinsley and his assistants, whose multi-volume history, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, is rightly subtitled "Its influence on strategy and operations". At least three-quarters of my references to Enigma are footnoted on their respective pages to these volumes.

In as much as all history is as intricate tapestry, I would not like your readers to feel that I have failed to make substantial use of, or to acknowledge, the vital Hinsley thread.

MARTIN GILBERT,
36 Parliament Hill, London NW3.

Philosophy and Neuroscience

Sir, – Galileo's telescope, and experimental evidence generally, were scorned by the cardinals as irrelevant and unnecessary. They knew that the celestial order was revealed as a matter of faith, pure reason and sacred text, and the very idea of moons revolving about Jupiter was an affront to all three. Observation of denormalizing data in the form of sun-spots and Jovian satellites was therefore impossible. In his review (February 6) of my book, *Neurophilosophy*, Colin McGinn displays a general reaction to neuroscience that bears a chilling resemblance to that of the cardinals. For McGinn, the very idea that our intuitive convictions concerning the nature of the mind might be reassessed by cognitive neuroscience is "virtually inconceivable". Intuitive (folk) psychology, insists McGinn, is "an autonomous mode of person understanding" (sic), and the autonomy he claims for it keeps it sacred, shielding it from whatever might be discovered by scientific investigation. But to call an explanatory framework "autonomous" is just a polite label for digging in and refusing to allow the relevance of empirical data. This is no more acceptable for psychology than it was for folk-physics, folk-astronomy, creationism, vitalism, or alchemy.

The main theme of my book is that if we want to understand the mind, research in neuroscience will have an essential role, as will research in psychology, ethology, computer modelling and philosophy. Very briefly, the reason is this: the brain is what sees, thinks, feels and so forth, and if we want to know how it performs those jobs, we will have to look at its components and organization. Psychology is essential, because it provides constraints at a higher level, and helps the neurobiologist specify the functions to be explained by neural networks. Modelling is essential because there are properties at the level of circuits that cannot be determined at the level of single-cell analysis. Co-evolution of theories at all levels, where each informs, corrects and inspires the others, is, therefore, the research ideology that looks most productive. At the same time, there is the empirical possibility that the result of a substantial period of co-evolution will yield a psychology and a neurobiology that look quite different from what we now work with. Some evidence in this direction is already available, as I show in several chapters of my book. Beyond the normal apprehension of things new, this prospect should not alarm McGinn, for it represents a deepening of our understanding of human nature.

What then is the role of philosophy? My view here is that philosophy is also essential to the wider project of understanding how the mind-brain works. It is, as always, the synoptic discipline: it attempts to synthesize the existing sciences into a unified and coherent account of reality. And it is, as always, a seminal discipline: in addressing the limits of common-sense understanding, it attempts to found new

sciences where none existed before. I think this role is very much in keeping with the long tradition in philosophy, as exemplified by Aristotle, Hume, Kant, James and Peirce. But I also say, "this sort of philosophy is not an *a priori* discipline pontificating grandly in the rest of science; it is in the swim with the rest of science and hence stands to be corrected as empirical discovery proceeds" (p 482).

McGinn, however, finds this conception of philosophy "absurd". He apparently wants to keep philosophy pure from the taint of empirical science, pure to undertake that most subtle of tasks, the analysis of concepts. Whose concepts? The concepts of the scientifically uninformed. The trouble is, know-nothing philosophy is dead-end philosophy, and the divination of *a priori* truths is a delusion. Without bridges to the relevant disciplines, philosophy becomes insular, ingrown and wanting in vigour. Such observations motivated Kenneth's Craik's call in 1943 (!) for an "experimental philosophy" of mind.

The real absurdity is to make a virtue out of ignorance and to scoff at informed research as "scientism". The doctrine of keeping philosophy pure makes the discipline look silly, and it is philosophy pursued under the banner of purity that quite naturally provokes the impatience and incredulity of the wider intellectual community. Moreover, the very best research by contemporary philosophers is richly cross-disciplinary, as can be seen in the work of Ned Block, Dan Dennett, John Earman, Arthur Fine, Jerry Fodor, Clark Glymour, Adolf Grünbaum, John Haugeland, Philip Kitcher, Michael Redhead, Elliot Sober and Stephen Stich, to name a few. A willingness to co-operate across disciplinary boundaries and an acute sense of the value of such exchanges is increasingly visible in this decade. This is surely a healthy development as we collectively get on with the question of how to make sense of our universe – and ourselves.

PATRICIA SMITH CHURCHLAND,
Philosophy Department and Cognitive Science Program,
University of California, San Diego, La Jolla,
California 92093.

'The Concept of Reality'

Sir, – In his review of my book *The Concept of Reality* (February 6), H. M. Robinson concentrates almost entirely on Chapter Thirteen, which he regards as crucial to the whole book, dismissing the preceding twelve chapters as unimportant. "All those twelve chapters really show", he claims, "is that certain concepts – such as entity, existence, truth and evidence – are not wholly logically independent of each other. It is not clear that anyone need deny that. This is quite inaccurate. The main thesis of the book is presented in Chapters Two to Ten, where I explore the categorical basis of our reasoning about reality. What emerges is a network of concepts that are *wholly* dependent upon each other; and they are different from the ones that the reviewer cites. Thus I discuss identity, individuality, unity of biographical time, error and plurality.

Having dismissed (the backbone of) the book, Dr Robinson turns to criticize Chapter Thirteen, where "real argument" begins, he claims. In fact, the argument in Chapter Thirteen is not pivotal to the whole work, but, leaving that aside, what is wrong with the argument it contains? Robinson seems to have two objections. The argument, he claims, contains an error of scope. If Jones asserts that there is something "Ind" (= independent of thought), he is in no way thinking of any specific thing as having that property, and hence his assertion involves no inconsistency. But Robinson misrepresents my account of such matters, which is this. Given that Jones is a perfectly rational being who is willing to assent to whatever is logically implied by what he asserts, it is possible to make the following inference. If he asserts that there are Ind-things, then he asserts by implication that all the Ind-things are Ind-like, and if he implicitly asserts the latter, then he can also be taken to be implicitly asserting that given any specific Ind-thing *x*, that thing, too, is Ind-like. This may not be an actual part of Jones's thought, but it is logically implied by what he asserts. (Robinson appears not to notice that I introduce special rules to over-ride "opacity" considerations.)

His second objection is that I confuse "It is

possible that this chair might actually be unthought of", which, he claims, is a pragmatic contradiction, with "It is possible that this chair might have been unthought of", which is not. This difference escapes me, but let us take the second proposition, which he says does not involve a "pragmatic contradiction", or, as I prefer to call it, "assertoric inconsistency". To begin with, it is necessary to rephrase this proposition thus: "It is possible that this chair might never have been thought of by anyone." However, if this is indeed possible, then surely it must be possible for the proposition "This chair is unthought of by anyone" to be true, and the latter proposition, of course, cannot be consistently asserted.

All this can be found in my book, provided one takes the trouble to read it.

EDO PIVČEVIĆ,
Department of Philosophy, University of Bristol,
9 Woodland Road, Bristol.

'Northanger Abbey'

Sir, – David Nokes's review of the BBC version of *Northanger Abbey* (Commentary, February 20) was very fair, but I am a shade surprised that he did not make any specific complaints about the "star" of the novel, the Abbey itself, since as a setting it was as gloriously inappropriate and misconceived as almost anything that Hollywood could ever produce in its most crass and ill-informed moments. Quite simply it was not an abbey but a castle, and so completely romantic and medieval that one can imagine it over-influencing even a young woman of moderate sense. It was a further instance of where, as David Nokes indicated, the production lacked the witty, detached and ironic "controlling voice", and the viewer was left wondering why, if the team wanted that kind of thing, they did not stray unashamedly into the full-blown and murky absurdity of a Mrs Radcliffe or "Mont" Lewis novel.

Jane Austen is quite specific as to what is required: "But so low did the building stand, that she found herself passing through the great gates of the lodge, into the very grounds of Northanger, without having discerned even an antique chimney." No mention of a moat or the erelements with which Giles Foster fortified his production. Inside, Catherine's room "was in all the profusion and elegance of modern taste. The fire-place where she had expected the ample width and ponderous carving of former times, was contracted to a rumford . . . To be sure, the pointed arch was preserved – the form of them was Gothic – they might be even casements – but every pane was so large, so clear, so light! To an imagination which had hoped for the smallest division, and the heaviest stone-work, for painted glass, dirt and cobwebs, the difference was very distressing." About as distressing as the "difference" offered to the disappointed purist who thought he might see something roughly appropriate. What on earth can be the point of these adaptations if they persist in being so wildly wrong?

BERNARD RICHARDS,
Brasenose College, Oxford.

John Cornford

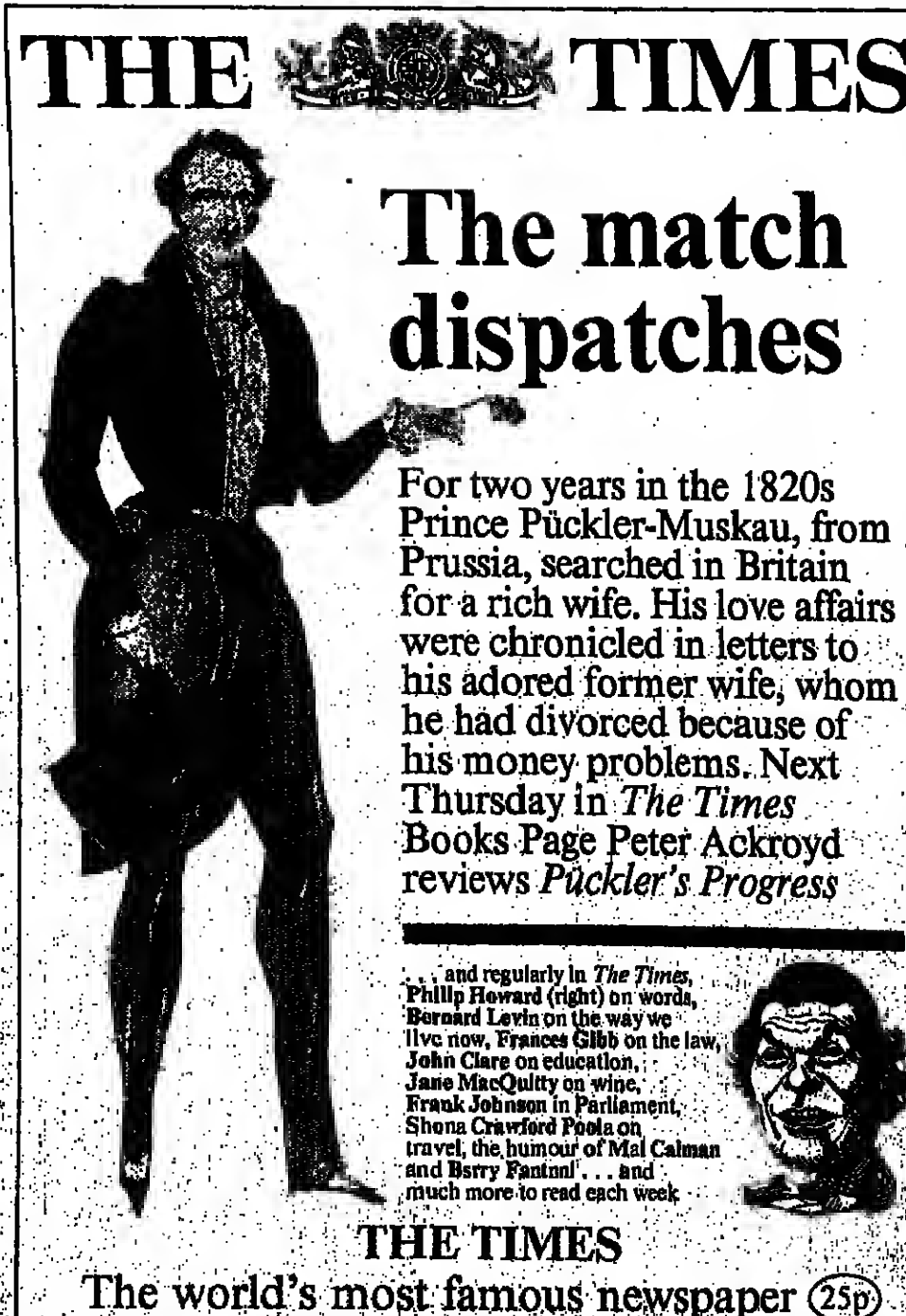
Sir, – Your reviewer Edward Mendelson (January 16) had no need to search through Karl Marx for the source of John Cornford's "most famous line". Poetry readers of the time would have recognized "Heart of the heartless world" as Auden; it comes from page 91 of *The Orators*.

REG SNELL,
12 Victoria Street, Totnes, Devon.

Cambrian Affinities

Sir, – James Serpell, in his review of *The Collins Encyclopedia of Animal Evolution* (January 16), finds such pleasure in the discovery of modern baeteria with Precambrian affinities "in wine-soaked soil beneath a wall of Harlech castle" that I feel churlish in pointing out a typographical error. In the original report it was "urine-soaked soil", which makes both the men of Harlech and the primordial slime far less interesting.

DAVID A. WEST,
607 Oliva Road, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060.



THE TIMES

The match dispatches

For two years in the 1820s Prince Pückler-Muskau, from Prussia, searched in Britain for a rich wife. His love affairs were chronicled in letters to his adored former wife, whom he had divorced because of his money problems. Next Thursday in *The Times* Books Page Peter Ackroyd reviews *Pückler's Progress*

and regularly in *The Times*, Philip Howard (right) on words, Bernard Levin on the way we live now, Frances Gibb on the law, John Clare on education, Jane MacGillivray on wine, Frank Johnson in Parliament, Shona Crawford Poole on travel, the humour of Mal Calman and Barry Fantini! . . . and much more to read each week.

THE TIMES

The world's most famous newspaper (25p)

The periodicals: Lines Review

James Campbell

LINES REVIEW
No 100, March 1987.
£4.40 per year. Edgefield Road, Loanhead,
Mid Lothian EH20 9SY.

Lines Review was first published as an eight-page poetry broadsheet in honour of Hugh MacDiarmid's sixtieth birthday in 1952 – which certainly makes it one of the most enduring Scottish literary magazines ever, if not the most adventurous. The latest issue – the hundredth – continues to reflect the neutral policy established by its first editor, Alan Riddall: "to publish the best poetry of whatever school we can find in Scotland". It includes work by English, American and Irish poets, as well as five Gaelic poems (together with translations) by Ruairidh MacThomais (Derek Thompson). Since the Scottish Arts Council began to underwrite the magazine in 1965, it has grown even harder: the first fifty issues took twenty-two years; the second half-century only seven years.

However, the last editor to do something to distinguish the contents of *Lines Review* from most other poetry magazines was Robin Fulton, who was in the chair from 1967 to 1977. Fulton, a poet himself and at the time resident in Scandinavia, regularly compiled sections composed of poems from Finland, Hungary, Sweden, and elsewhere, and occasionally devoted an entire issue to an essay or a work of

criticism. The present editor, Trevor Roy, has reverted to the less imaginative policy of serving up shapely anthologies of new poetry, following the age-old recipe (tried, tested and dull) of mixing new poets with familiar ones. There is nothing wrong with the material itself – a fine long love poem by Edwin Morgan, and – six typically neat shorts from Norman MacCaig ("Time" has escaped from the ticking clock) – but the atmosphere of the pages is bound to be bland when each issue seems more or less identical to the last. The same thistled cover every time doesn't help.

The present *Lines* contains a look back over the magazine's history by Hilda Spear and a review of *A Gortoch Miscellany*, which the publishers have issued under the *Lines Review* Editions imprint (210pp. Loanhead: MacDiarmid. Paperback, £7.95, 0 86334 057 1). Edited by Robin Fulton, and intended as a companion to Gortoch's brilliant *Complete Poetical Works* (1983), the *Miscellany* prints letters, reviews (most of them first published in *Lines*), the text of Gortoch's "Masque of Edinburgh" (1954), plus notes and memoirs by Edwin Morgan, Sorley MacLean, Derek Thompson and Gortoch himself. It is the one hundredth of a series of letters which will give most pleasure to celebrants of Gortoch's poetry. Addressed to, among others, Michael Schmidt of *Canaan* (which published Gortoch's first collection, *Poems*), Antonia Stott, who helped in his various translations of Giuseppe Belli, and in various Scottish writers, they display the same mischievous wit as his poem.

John Ramos-Horta's *Funus: The unfinished story of East Timor* is distributed in the UK by Spokesman at £20 (paperback: £6.95).

The Specialist Collection relating to publishing and the book trade, mentioned by H. R. Woudhuysen in his article on the British Library (Chadwyck-Healey) project, *The Nineteenth Century* (February 27), will cost £2,400 for approximately 2,500 (not 500) folios.

John Cornford

Counter-lives in counterpoint

Eric Korn

PHILIP ROTH
The Counterlife
328pp. Cape. £10.95.
024028715

Zuckerdaddy rides again! In Philip Roth's latest, most cunningly fabricated, most packed, most seductively entertaining, entangling and rewarding fiction for years.

"Another spoonful of Zuckerman, no?" I hear you complain, "Enough already with this Zuckerman. Will Roth never tire of this New Jersey Jewish complainant, notorious author of the notorious *Carnovsky*, who owes his fame and his shame to an explicit exposing of his adolescent hangups and hangdowns and the response of his family and his public; will he never cease tormenting his shadow persona, washing his *teffin*, his Jewish dirty linen before the gossipy public?"

I hope not. I don't know or care how far Roth and Zuckerman factually coincide. (In a recent interview Roth says that Roth hasn't had to suffer paternal disapproval.) Zuckerman, however, is an anxiety basket case with a family whose disapproval is as boundless as God's, with whom it has considerable areas of overlap. And it is through Zuckerman that Roth can show his grateful readers endless new worlds of unconquerable shame and embarrassment. As H. G. Wells said of his alter ego Bliss, author of *Boon*, before launching him in the direction of Henry James (not a Boon James appreciated): "I do not wish to escape the penalties of this participating in, and endorsing, his manifest breaches of good taste, decorum and friendly obligation, but... Bliss can write all sorts of things that Wells could not do." Zuckerman can do many things that Roth cannot do: as dreams permit us to act out our passions and anxieties without physical injury, so Zuckerman can be flayed, assaulted, persecuted by mad strangers, denounced by every rabbi and rabid relative, indicted by every passing superego, dumped on by every over-flowing id, killed, resuscitated and even abolished without any damage to Roth, other than the damage that is salutary for a writer.

In the course of this new novel, which is convoluted without being in any way difficult - it is indeed compellingly easy to read and difficult to put down - a sequence of unexpected things happens to Roth's protagonists, some of them surprising: the surprises are often hilarious and delicately engineered. Zuckerman has a brother, Henry. Henry is a conscientious dentist, an able dentist; a "good" dentist, if the concept is not too difficult. He is a good, able and conscientious husband and father. Good Henry has given up the love of his mid-life, blonde Maria from Basel, and the chance of escape to a clean, blonde, sexy, guilt-free Aryan snow (there are no blonde Jewesses in Zuckermanland), for the sake of good Jewish Carol and his children. From his blonde assistant, Wendy, what he gets is only such elementary oral compensation as any uxorious dentist has a right to, but it is a right he will die for. Henry has a beard condition; Henry takes drugs that keep him alive but reduce his sexual drive to zero. Henry doesn't want to live without his libido. Henry has a risky cardiac bypass, Henry dies.

And now we discover that this is not Henry's narrative but brother Nathan's draft for another family-bond-straining novel. (I wondered why those first pages were in italics.) On learning of his brother's death, Nathan has been too busy making notes to prepare a funeral eulogy, but Carol is ready. She speaks of his great sacrifice for the sake of the marriage bond. Only nasty Nathan (and Wendy, presumably) get to enjoy the irony, and of course the remorse, for Nathan could have saved Henry by the right advice, that a change of life is not worth dying for.

No, there's been a slight misunderstanding here, as the second section opens. Henry did not die, the operation was a success. Henry suffers remorse for the risk he took and the frivolous reasons for it, and goes to Israel, joining a group of Gush Emunim settlers in Judea (or the Israeli-occupied West Bank if you prefer: not even names in Israel can be ideologically neutral), Zionist survivalists and superpatriots. "Excuse me, what is fanatical?"

To put egoism before Zionism is what is fanatical!... What is fanatical is the Jew who never learns! The Jew oblivious to the Jewish state and the Jewish land and the survival of the Jewish people! Henry has abandoned the good wife and children (who were too Jewish for him by half in his last avatar) for a life that has historical meaning. Zuckerman goes after him to dissuade him, to taste the counterlife of the Jewish state before returning to Maria. His Maria now, Maria from Gloucestershire, not Switzerland, an escape into English pastoral rather than Alpine athleticism, his blonde escape route from schickel to shiksa. Israel is a comic inferno where every passer-by harangues him about his Jewish soul. Every Israeli denounces, with passion or irony, every other Israeli as deluded; Henry's Rambo guru, Mordecai Lippman, sneers at "the Museum of Jewish Self-hatred", the niceys and goodies who believe that there can be armed peace, or any peace at all; the Tel-Aviv liberals sneer at the fanatics ("the Bible is their Bible"); and crazy Jimmy, a Zuckerman fan, misses the Giants: "Not till there is baseball in Israel will Messiah come!"

Israelis believe, unitedly, in the inevitability of antisemitism:

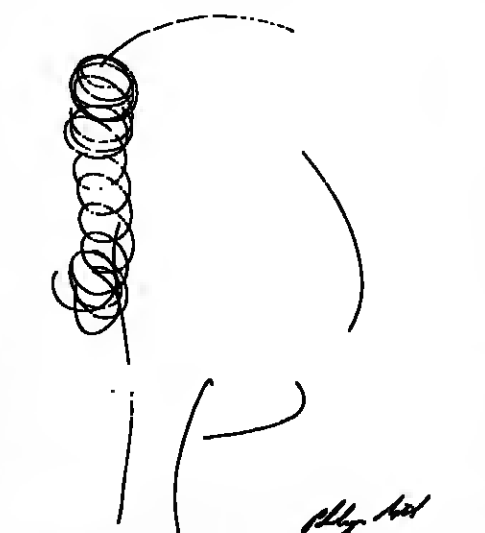
I am in Norway on business for my product and written on a wall I read 'Down With Israel'. I think 'What did Israel ever do to Norway?' I know Israel is a terrible country but after all, there are countries more terrible... Why don't you read our Norwegian walls, 'Down with Russia', 'Down with Chile', 'Down with Libya'? Because Hitler didn't murder six million Libyans?

With relish they predict a racial holocaust in America. Nathan has just experienced fashionable-left anti-Zionism among Maria's dinner-table friends and found in it the taste of anti-semitism.

The flight home to London is eventful: Nathan is just writing a quiet letter to Henry, setting him straight about identity (Israel is the place Jews go for their counterlife, to unlearn themselves), when crazy Jimmy tries to high-jack the plane in the cause of escaping from his history: "I demand the immediate closing and dismantling of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem's Museum and Remembrance Hall of the Holocaust... Israel needs no Hitler for the right to be Israel!" The security men think Nathan is implicated: as a literary man, he is at the very least responsible for T. S. Eliot's well-known antisemitism, and he experiences oppression with a Jewish face.

No, he doesn't. Nathan hasn't been anywhere. Nathan wants to marry his blonde Eng-

lish Maria, but his heart condition is affecting his sexual function. Will the perilous operation save him? Will he risk all for love? Of course. After the funeral, where Nathan's editor reads a rather laboured eulogy, more a review of *Carnovsky*, Henry goes through Nathan's papers to see if his adultery (with Maria; his relations with dental assistant Wendy were, we learn, purely professional) is going to be posthumously revealed. He is outraged to find not only the copy for the eulogy, written by Nathan himself, but also the dirt on Henry, distorted so that Henry got the fatal heart condition and Nathan got Maria. What Henry finds, in fact, is the novel we are reading; for a dizzy moment



Novelist in search of an identity? This self-portrait by Philip Roth is included in *Burt Brin'ton's Self-Portrait: Book People Picture Themselves, and is reproduced in Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, Seventh Series (331pp. Secker and Warburg. £17.50. 0 436 37613), which will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the TLS.*

we glimpse, through Henry's outraged eyes, the sections we haven't yet read. But how can we? Henry took the first two chapters and threw them in a trash-can outside a Harvard Johnson's on the New Jersey turnpike, leaving only the last section (which describes the idyll that never was) for Maria to find and brood over, and be interrogated about by Nathan's ghost.

So we know just what we are reading when we come to the last section, "Christendom". It is simply the account, in a lost novel by an imaginary dead writer, of the denouement to a story that did not happen to some other people. Zuckerman is alive again, he never dies.

Across the divide

Anna Vaux

ZHANG JIE
Leadon Wings
Translated by Gladys Yang
180pp. Virago. £9.95 (paperback, £3.95).
086068 5797

Set in present-day Beijing - and described as China's first political novel - *Leadon Wings* focuses on the restrictions and prohibitions of a world where politics are in command and everything is, or is meant to be, obedient to principle. It is also a methodically realistic book, dense with working life. The thirty-two characters are not arranged in a complex counterpoint to tell a story, but with anatomical looseness to give a social picture. There is talk of hydraulic engines, kilowatts and generators, quotes and projects. The management of public funds is discussed, and its bearing on economic realities followed through to the queues for cabbage or the three generations living in a single, ten square-metre room. Zhang Jie proceeds between the way a woman arranges her hair and the meetings called to discuss permanent waves; or between "model" marriages and state marriage policy; to create a book that demonstrates both the reduction of life to a statistic and an abundance of life that still exceeds the figures.

It is in the scheme of things, however, that the individual has disappeared. And, although Zhang Jie's subject is China's modernization, the struggle between those who want to reform

and those who oppose it - *Leadon Wings* has at its core the reassertion of the individual life. One of the larger paradoxes of the book is that the factual language, the obsessive concentration on objects and numbers, are at the service of a didacticism which claims the priority of less tangible things. Zhang Jie scrutinizes the intimate bond between Autumn, a reporter in middle age, and Mo Zheng, the young boy with a disgraced past who lives with her as her adopted son; and examines the empty but exemplary marriage between Old Zheng and Bamboo, to underline (and discredit) the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate feelings. The culmination of the novel comes when Mo Zheng and Old Zheng's daughter, Yuanyuan, fall in love across that divide.

There is, too, a disruptive undertone of suspicion: a concentration on spying, eavesdropping and secrecy, the details and idiosyncrasies which always evade any stable order. Yuanyuan's mother goes through her drawers and private things to collect photographs and evidence against Yuanyuan's illicit love affair, in order to bring her back to the family fold and restore her to social decency. It is an incident which beautifully embodies the central paradox: Yuanyuan's youth, "What right have you to search my room?" That's against the Constitution.

Zhang Jie's free-ranging account of events and incidents which actually progress very little posits a number of questions. And, together with the novel's pervasive nostalgia - characters look back to the 1950s, or to ancient and feudal ethics - this gives the impression of circularity. The narrative moves round charac-

ters' lives in search of an explanation for why they feel gloomy and cheated, and for a way out of the circle that their history seems to have closed on them. By far the greatest part of the novel is spent questioning behaviour, inner feelings, and doubting information: public meetings are often simply lists of questions. As a result, the whole form and language of the book is open-ended. There is no conclusion - no resolution - to the story. Mo Zheng and Yuanyuan run off to get married, but the political jockeying continues, the dialogue at the Dawn Motor Works in fact thickens, and the lives of other characters remain unsettled.

Leadon Wings is a novel of social life, very much of the present, yet unable to escape itself of a past that in many ways is protective towards. This leads to an occasionally unhappy relationship between the industrial story which carries Zhang Jie's plot and the personal stories, which are far more lively but which do not cohere of more towards. The metaphorical burden of the book, the end falls on a rebellious couple whose development we have actually seen very little of. Yet despite the tendency to degenerate into a novel of the past, the achievement lies in the careful preservation of the exception to the rule.

We regret that in John McMeol's novel of *Drunk with Love*, by Ellen Glickman (17 March 6), the essentially American McMeol of the story "The Young Man" becomes rather Dickensian "Mrs Beadle".

He is married in Maris in London, but his sister and her mother are rabid antisemites, betraying that well-bred racism that is so native to the English. (Does Roth really believe that the English think Jews are so?) Paranoïd Zuckerman, learning from his last tormentors, harries Maris till he gets the spouse he wants. When he comes back looking at the dream home they will never have in, Maris has gone: she has left him and taken him, manipulated once too often: "she receives of herself as my fabrication, brandishing self a fantasy and cleverly absconds", Maris complains, unfairly under the circumstances. In his counterletter he sticks by his demand (for the circumcision of his unborn and ideal child). England has made a Jew of him, Maris could not. "It may be as you say that Maris is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

The continuing Irish present

Neil Corcoran

EDNA LONGLEY
Poetry in the North
340pp. Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe.
£12.95 (paperback, £6.95).
0946227 246

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Irish context. The book's defences and attacks are mounted with great verve and, occasionally, with an almost venomous asperity. The attack on *North* culminates in an identification of Heaney with Derek Mahon's fire king, attending to his people's prayers "Not to release them / From the ancient curse / But to die their creature and he thankful"; Paulin is "deeply affected and patronising" and "creates division where unities already exist"; Deane manifests the strains of "reconciling Derry with Derrida"; and all three, having chosen to live outside Northern Ireland, "fall into the tropes of stylised retrospect". Mahon, on the other hand, is admirable for a "tragic consciousness" which refuses the "consolations" of the elegiac and Utopian; and Muldoon, inheriting the attitudes and some of the procedures of MacNeice, shows paradigmatically how poetry may act as "midwife to a future not predicated on the past".

These essays on the poetry of the Irish present, with their own scrupulous discrimination among ways in which "poets make their... contribution by refusing to betray 'semantic scruple' in a country of unscrupulous rhetoricians, where names break bones, where careless talk costs lives", are, really, required reading: challenging, provocative, irritating, sometimes devastatingly decided and partial. I think it unfortunate that Longley has chosen not to offer a more substantial account of Heaney. Her essay originally limited itself to *North*, I presume, only because it was commissioned as an article on that book; and as the attack depends heavily on a sense of the opposed virtues of *Wintering Out*, it would have been good to

trusts the contingencies of speech: hut on the other hand the poetry of speech may really be as flat and enervated as it sometimes seems. *Spirits of the Place* opens with musings on middle age and identity. The outlook is bleak and undelighted, while the consolations are drink and solitary walking. Mortality is in the offing, yet Connor writes as if there's all the time in the world, permitting himself relaxed self-prompts like "Now I come to think of it" or "And yet I must, I suppose". At times this ease is contrasted with impressively rendered particulars - a bar with its "beer-weary" air, or the losers at a luncheonette whose faces are "open and close on burgers / not looking at one another / like survivors of a blast" - but these stand out oddly, as though elsewhere Connor is politely maintaining silence in the face of a profoundly depressing uniformity-in-variety.

The second section finds Connor back among the Lancastrians, watching cricket at Rawtenstall, remembering schoolfellows and relatives, grieving at the narrowness of outlook be witnessed as a child. Town life in Lancashire without much money and with few ways out seems strangely exotic here, for Connor's inside-outsider's view confers glamour on the banal and typical. Yet, as in the American poems, passion seems spent - a feeling enforced by the difference between the prevailing plain craftsmanship and the sudden intensity released when loyalty and belief are in conflict. The poem reaches a disappointingly willed conclusion ("I read among the feet - / watching, waiting, Knowledge-chillad"), and there comes an exasperated wish for a power in Connor to make detail grow into metaphor - as, say, Tony Harrison does in his finest work, *Continuum*, where the ordinary is graced with a profound coherence.

On the evidence of earlier work, such as the "Secret Poems" and "Elegy for Alfred Hubbard", it's not lack of talent that prevents Connor from escaping his besetting modesty. Indeed, there are a few surprises in the poems from India which conclude this collection. The sense of incompleteness, of energy running out too soon, is strangely apt when Connor - declarations of ignorance and inadequacy politely to the fore - warily picks his way through an inexplicable continent "on a truck that's no more / then a strip of extra-bald, wandering dustiness". With light irony, he admires the persistence of a people who can coax "any old broken engine" back "into roaring life". It is to be hoped that this interesting and sometimes admirable poet will achieve a comparable restoration of his appetite and confidence.

In a sense it's strange to find similarities between some of *Spirits of the Place* and Thom Gunn's work from *Touch* onwards. The two began very differently: Gunn as a metaphysician, Connor in developing an idiom to deal with his Lancashire community. Yet they meet in the unbuttoned, garrulous mode they seem to have developed in America. Connor has had less distance to travel, never having shown much interest in argument or abstraction, but both have gone on to disappoint, for related reasons. Time may prove that Old World readers are too costly, too preoccupied with conceit and closure to listen to a poetry which

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Longley's anti-modernist and anti-political polemic is inspired, throughout, by Edward Thomas's role as a "radical continuator", and he makes a powerful and spirited case, in a number of essays, for his centrality. She also offers an excellent and entirely persuasive account of Keith Douglas ("not skeletal poetry, but poetry with no superfluous flesh, fighting for the cadence of energy"); but the essay on MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* founders in a curiously insubstantial and half-hearted explanation of text. Longley's critical manner, which is admirably strenuous and engaged, can nevertheless sometimes seem too laboured and unrelated, too busily and protectively concerned to make his case. She is, however, properly critical of the tendency among commentators on contemporary poetry to ignore metrical and syntactical analysis. Her own work shows how difficult it is to make metrical matters at all lively in contemporary critical prose, but also how rewarding a painstaking account of syntax brings to mind, because the bedazzled ear hears clearly. Through all the twists and turns, Longley's immaculately realized novel, Roth lets us lose sight of anything, especially his capacity for self-delusion.

Edna Longley's introduction to *Poetry in the North* explains matters in characteristically unobtrusive style: "My title suggests that poetry is fought over, that in some sense it fights, and that these areas overlap." This collection of essays wages its battle on behalf of Edward Thomas, Robert Frost, Keith Douglas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Derek Mahon and is not life, but this life is as close to life as any humane scepticism and proper political obliquity. The enemies are Modernism, Marxism, 'structuralism' (which 'dissolves form in discourse'), and the sophisticated versions of Irish nationalism that Longley finds in Seamus Heaney's *North*, Tom Paulin's *Liberty Tree*, Seamus Deane's criticism and, indeed, the whole cultural enterprise associated in Ireland, with the (now defunct) journal *The Crane* and with the theatre and publishing company, Field Day.

PETER McDONALD

NEW GRAFTON BOOKS

BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS THE KILLING OF ANN CHAPMAN Richard Cottrell

The brutal murder of Ann Chapman, a Radio London reporter, in Athens in 1971 during the dictatorship of the Greek Colonels, has never been satisfactorily explained. Now, the true facts have been unearthed. They indicate that Ann, who was acting as a courier for the Greek resistance, was killed by agents of the Greek state, and not by the semi-literate labourer who was convicted on perjured evidence. Richard Cottrell's gripping re-examination of the affair throws light on some extraordinary international intrigues and solves many problems raised by subsequent events.

246 127365 ILLUSTRATED £12.95

MODERN MYSTERIES OF BRITAIN Janet and Colin Bord

Weeping Madonnas, phantom black dogs, mysterious disappearances, UFO's and beings from other worlds, sea and lake monsters, fairies and 'naive spirits', and poltergeists are among the 'modern mysteries' to which the Bords - unrivalled authorities in the field of unexplained phenomena - now turn their attention.

246 126353 ILLUSTRATED £14.95

RUTH MONTGOMERY: HERALD OF THE NEW AGE

Ruth Montgomery with Joanne Garland

A born septic, Ruth Montgomery did not embrace the psychic world immediately, but used her investigative skills as a journalist to explore psychic phenomena.

In this book we follow Ruth Montgomery from her first seance, through her emergence into the realm of mediums, prophets, and spiritualists, to her dazzling success as an international psychic authority.

246 131984 £10.95

SPIDER WORLD: THE TOWER Colin Wilson

Spider World is Colin Wilson's first venture into science fantasy, a brilliantly conceived saga of 25th-century men enslaved by spiders, and of one human with the strength of mind to fight to bring about the rebirth of his race. *Most formidable, a really fine work of imaginative fantasy.*

RICHARD ADAMS
246 12510 I £10.95
246 131462 £8.95 pb

GRAFTON BOOKS

A Division of the Collins Publishing Group

John Co 136

Mysterious people

Richard Fletcher

ROGER COLLINS
The Basques
272pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £14.95.
0631 134786

The anonymous French author of the twelfth-century guidebook for pilgrims to Compostela had a low opinion of the Basques. They were, he thought, as barbaric as the Irish, to whom they must be related. Indeed, he continued, it was said that they were descended from a combined troop of Nubians, Irish and Britons, improbably sent by Julius Caesar to make the Spaniards pay their taxes, who took to wives the women of Vizcaya and Alava. This was neither the first nor the last, nor by any means the most exotic, attempt to explain the origins and early history of this most mysterious people.

Investigation of them is hampered by two drawbacks. One is the almost crippling lack of evidence relating to the Basques before about the year 1000. The other is the rise of modern Basque nationalism (and its opponents) which has muddled the currents of scholarly debate. Roger Collins is undeterred: his excellent book is distinguished by restraint and common sense; as well as by considerable ingenuity in fitting together the fragments of evidence to construct a coherent account.

Sixteenth-century antiquarians claimed that Basque was the language spoken in the Garden of Eden. Collins concedes that it is of great antiquity and definitely not Indo-European, but prudently goes no further. The prehistoric archaeology of the Basque region is meagre, and cannot help in the search for Basque origins. Faint light begins to dawn with the first written references to the Basques about the

beginning of the Christian era. Collins does his best with the comments of Græco-Roman ethnographers such as Strabo, while recognizing that they had as little need for first-hand knowledge of their subject as did Tacitus on the Germans. He makes a persuasive case for supposing that the Basques were more Romanized, less isolated, less hostile to Mediterranean culture during the Roman period than has often been supposed; and the case is supported by, among other evidence, his intriguing revelation of a cohort of Basques stationed at High Rochester, north of Hadrian's Wall, in the third century. The case for the spread of Christianity into the lowland Basque regions of the upper Ebro valley by about 300 seems equally cogent, though there is no evidence of Christianity in the further, highland zones until a much later date.

Thus far, and peculiarities of language apart, the history of the Basque country has analogies with the history of other western regions of the Roman Empire – Armorica, say, or Dumonia. “The parting of the ways”, the title of Collins's fine third chapter, came later. Three developments seem to have been important. The withering of Roman rule disrupted the market-relationships from which the never exclusively pastoralist economy of the Basques had profited and wrought seismic changes upon lowland-highland, town-country patterns of dependence. Political change as a result of the barbarian invasions transformed the Basque country into a frontier zone between the hostile powers of Visigoth and Merovingian Frank. Inferred demographic growth in the western Pyrenees, together with the exigencies of inheritance customs, gave the Basques the need and the opportunity for territorial expansion. As obscure as the Slavonic drift into Greece which was occurring at the same time, the Basques seeped north into Aquitaine and south towards the Rioja during the sixth and

seventh centuries. Gascony – Vasconia – emerged. Muslim emirs of al-Andalus and Carolingian mayors and kings were to find its inhabitants quite as difficult to contain in the eighth century as had their Visigothic and Merovingian predecessors in the seventh.

In these circumstances the Basque people won out as *tertius gaudens*. A kingdom of Pamplona, later to be known as Navarre, emerged in the ninth century; so too, north of the Pyrenees, an effectively independent duchy of Gascony. Given the lack of native chronicles, hagiography or (before the eleventh century) charters, their political history has to be pieced together from fragments of dynastic genealogy and the occasional comment by Frankish, Asturian or Hispano-Muslim annalists. The author wrestles judiciously with these laconic materials, but one can almost hear his sigh of relief when he turns to the marginally better-documented theme of Basque culture, broadly defined. There are some illuminating pages on the literary culture of the ninth and tenth centuries (surprisingly precocious), on matrilineal inheritance, on Basque migration to Castile, on the earliest piece of writing in Basque (from 1055), on transhumant pastoralism, on the

growth of exchange and towns, and on the gradual infiltration of French cultural influence from the eleventh century onwards.

Despite the ephemeral empire of Sancho III, Great (d 1035), which stretched from Bayona to León, a distinctively Basque identity never did emerge. Gascony was absorbed into Angevin rule by a dynastic marriage and later there by the insatiable English thirst for more territory. The French monarchy, Navarre by Aragon and Castile; and looked inland to the ocean. If the Basques no more discovered America – another cherished national myth – than the Welsh, they played a significant role in opening it up. Today there are more Basques in Nevada than in Navarre.

This is an absorbing book by a gifted historian. The text is decently printed, the footnotes are where they should be, the maps are adequate alike for quantity and clarity, and the illustrations are always apposite (though the author will have to take a magnifying glass to decipher Asnar's charter on p 205). It marks an auspicious beginning for Blackwell's new series, The Peoples of Europe, edited by John Campbell and Barry Cunliffe.



A detail of a photograph of the high altar of the chapel, reproduced from St Alban's College, Valladolid. Four centuries of English Catholic presence in Spain (288pp. Hurst. £18.50. 1 85065 0193).

Feudal high politics

John Edwards

T. N. BISSON
The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A short history
230pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £27.50.
019 8221983

T. N. Bisson's “short history” of the nimby and varied regions which made up the medieval “Crown” of Aragon is billed as an up-to-date replacement for Chaytor's now-venerable *History of Aragon and Catalonia* (1933). It may thus be expected to reflect much new research and the changes in historical fashion which have occurred more recently. One obvious tendency has been the growing status of social and economic history, a change which has particularly affected the study of late medieval Catalonia, and therefore demands the attention of the writer of a general survey like this.

In his seven comparatively brief chapters, Bisson responds to this challenge, though the available documents make it harder to take a social and economic approach to the crucial period in which the loose federation of “Aragonese” and “Catalan” territories was formed. As a result he tends to resort to a straight political narrative, while also including, for every period, consideration of cultural achievements and developments, as well as economic trends and social conflicts. Bisson is noted for his distinguished contributions to the study of coinage and monetary history, so it is not surprising that the role of money is often, and authoritatively, stressed. However, one finishes the work with a strong impression that his natural instinct is to stay with high politics, and that his forays into questions of economic “rise” and “decline” are made out of duty rather than genuine conviction.

Yet there is much useful, not to say essential,

material here. Bisson's book is, in some respects, more coherent than J. N. Hillgarth's earlier, and larger, study, *The Spanish Kingdoms*. It also gains from covering a longer period than the late Middle Ages alone. The irritating, and sometimes obfuscating, Catalan and anti-Castilian bias of Hillgarth's work is, happily, largely absent here. However, it is not particularly easy to read. The political narrative tends to appear in a series of short, staccato, and rather dogmatic sentences, instead of developing a longer, more flowing argument. In contrast, the passages on economic history, in particular the supposed decline after the Black Death of 1348-51, are more fluent, but unduly sceptical towards the work of Villar and other distinguished economic and social historians of Catalonia. Given the great advances made in the understanding of economic life in Castile, especially in the later Middle Ages, achieved on the basis of manuscript materials much inferior to those of Aragon, one cannot but be suspicious of Bisson's constant professions of ignorance concerning the undoubted decline of Aragon in this later period. He seems anxious to down economic arguments and assert that everything is caused by politics. Religion is well served after. References to Burns's stellar work on thirteenth-century Valencia are surprisingly limited, and Bisson makes sweeping statements about the level of literacy in the later period, which surely need the critical approach he appears to reserve for other medieval writers.

The Medieval Crown of Aragon is a useful book for anyone who wants a clear and brief account of unfamiliar territory, even if Bisson's style ranges from the competent to the extraordinary passages of travelogue, especially at the beginning and end, to statements which assume a knowledge of feudal terminology. The book's likely readers will not possess,

Unravelling the thread

Malcolm Budd

NORMAN MALCOLM
Nothing is Hidden: Wittgenstein's criticism of his early thought
232pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £22.50.
019 137440

F. M. S. HACKER
Language and Illusion: Themes in the philosophy of Wittgenstein
232pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £25 (paperback, £9.95).
019 237834
MERRILL L. B. HINTIKKA and JAAKKO HINTIKKA
Investigating Wittgenstein
232pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £27.50.
019 141790

These three studies of Wittgenstein's thought are strikingly different in style, focus, understanding and allegiance. Whereas Peter Hacker is the outstanding Wittgensteinian scholar of his generation, and Norman Malcolm the best-known of his disciples, Merrill and Jaakko Hintikka are not followers.

The Hintikkas see themselves as literary detectives who enjoy the task of teasing out the true meaning of a philosopher's words; and the excitement that they undoubtedly felt in unravelling the thread of Wittgenstein's thought is a palpable and engaging feature of their book. Its principal aim is to establish the correct understanding, and the main lines of development, of Wittgenstein's ideas. Their strategy is to let Wittgenstein speak for himself as far as possible by extensive quotation from his published and unpublished writing, and this approach is particularly successful in illuminating Wittgenstein's comparatively neglected middle period. But much of the book is inevitably concerned with the philosophy of the *Tractatus*: it is here that the Hintikkas' story starts, and it is against the insidious temptations to which he gave way in the construction of his first philosophy that the most powerful of Wittgenstein's later attacks are directed. And by pushing further the pioneering work of David Pears on the influence – by assimilation and rejection – of Russell's ideas on the young Wittgenstein, they throw light into some of the darkest corners of the *Tractatus*.

Their book overlaps with Professor Malcolm's, which has the *Tractatus* as its principal focus. But his approach is different. Malcolm wishes to show that many of the leading ideas of the *Tractatus* were abandoned by Wittgenstein in his later thinking. To this end he constructs a series of confrontations between the

early and late Wittgenstein: by juxtaposing the thoughts of the first period with the corresponding thoughts of the final period, each casts light on the other. This part of the work is well designed. But Malcolm's book suffers from the same weakness as the Hintikkas': it is markedly less successful when it eventually turns away from the *Tractatus* to the interpretation of the later philosophy considered in itself.

Here Hacker's book scores heavily, as it does in many other ways. It is a substantially revised version of the book of the same title (but different subtitle) he published fifteen years ago. Like its predecessor, it covers a range of central themes in Wittgenstein's work; but much of it has been changed beyond recognition to remove the many misunderstandings Hacker has detected in the original edition. This new edition, imbued with Hacker's exceptional knowledge of Wittgenstein's unpublished writing, displays a thorough mastery of every phase of Wittgenstein's thought, and replaces its predecessor as the best general study of Wittgenstein's philosophy.

The most extravagant of the many differences of interpretation present in these works is to be found in the accounts they offer of two crucial and closely connected aspects of Wittgenstein's later philosophy of language and mind: his views on rule-following and sensations.

Malcolm puts forward a strong version of the currently popular community-interpretation of Wittgenstein's investigation of the concept of following a rule. He ascribes to Wittgenstein the view that the concept of following a rule implies the concept of a community of rule-followers in which there is agreement about which actions conform with the rule: someone can truly be said to follow a rule only if he is a member of such a community. Hence, there could not be an individual who grew up in isolation from any society and developed the capacity to follow rules – rules that govern a system of signs, say. And not only does Malcolm attribute this view of the concept of rule-following to Wittgenstein: he claims that much of what is novel and important in Wittgenstein's post-*Tractatus* thinking depends on it. Moreover, he undertakes to argue that this conception of rule-following is correct. But it is unsurprising that Malcolm's attempt to ground this interpretation in the texts of Wittgenstein's later work is totally unconvincing. For the view of rule-following he credits Wittgenstein with is not present in his published work. And the reason it is absent is that Wittgenstein considered it to be mistaken. Malcolm is unaware that there is conclusive evidence that pinning his favoured view on Wittgenstein involves a

serious misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's later thought. For – as both Hacker and the Hintikkas point out – Wittgenstein rejected this account of rule-following in his unpublished manuscripts: he there explicitly conceded the conceptual possibility of an individual rule-follower, isolated from any community whose members follow the same rules as he does. It is easy to see where Malcolm has gone wrong: he misconstrues Wittgenstein's rejection of the idea of a rule that is essentially unshareable as the assertion that it is impossible for a socially isolated individual to follow a rule.

Perhaps the most extraordinary part of the Hintikkas' book is that which purports to explain Wittgenstein's views about “private experience”. They maintain that Wittgenstein's “private language argument” constitutes a criticism not of Cartesian metaphysics, but only of Cartesian semantics. They argue that Wittgenstein conceived of sensations as real events that are private “in a perfectly straightforward Cartesian sense”, but that he held that we can use language to name or describe these private events only by means of a public framework: a “private object” can be spoken of only by means of a public correlate. Accordingly, although sensations are private events, sensation-language can never be essentially private but must always be publicly understandable. The Hintikkas are well aware of the controversial nature of their interpretation and they argue at length in support of their view that Wittgenstein was a covert believer in a Cartesian metaphysics. But if they had spent more time clarifying their claim that he regarded sensations as being private events (“in a perfectly straightforward Cartesian sense”), they might have withdrawn it. Although their interpretation is far from being lucid, it is certainly intended to carry the implication that Wittgenstein thought of sensations as not being “publicly accessible”, and this, together with the invocation of Descartes, is a fair indication of their state of confusion. They fail to appreciate Wittgenstein's delicate treatment of the issue of the supposed privacy of sensations: they have little understanding of his account of the verbal expression of sensation; and they are compelled to adduce in support of their interpretation remarks whose illogical intent they are blind. The result is a travesty of Wittgenstein's view: he would have been the first to question his sense.

Hacker's treatment of the topics of rule-following and sensations is greatly superior to anything on these matters in Malcolm's or the Hintikkas' book. He fully exposes the error of the community-interpretation and he has too

firm a grasp of Wittgenstein's reflections on privacy and the self-ascription of present sensations to fall for the absurd idea that Wittgenstein conceived of sensations as Cartesian immaterial events about which nothing can be said except by means of a public correlate. But his own account of Wittgenstein's investigation of the concept of sensation is not free from difficulty. In explaining his rejection of the model of “object and name (*Bezeichnung*)” as unsuitable for the grammar of the verbal expression of sensation, Hacker considers a case in which your touching my injured arm causes me pain and I cry out “It hurts” or I moan. He allows that we can properly say that your touching my arm caused me to cry out, but asserts that we should not say that the pain caused me to moan or cry out. And the reason for this is that the pain “is not an intermediate object or event between your touching and my crying out, connected to each in a causal chain”. If this correctly represents Wittgenstein's view – it is curious that the *Investigations* is silent about the apparent causal role of sensations – then it contains a crucial weakness. It would not be plausible to deny that my pain can be caused by what happens to my body. This is specially clear when there is a distinct temporal gap between what is done to my body and the resulting pain and bodily reaction.

But in any event Hacker is certainly in no position to deny this: he writes into his case that your touching my arm causes me pain. He must therefore allow that my pain is a later event caused by your touching my arm. But if he concedes this much his view is rendered problematic. For the question must arise. What is the relation between this later event (the pain) and my moan or cry? Hacker is committed to denying that this relation can be causal and his view would appear to be that a pain cannot properly be thought of as a cause either of its verbal or of its non-verbal manifestations in behaviour. But if my pain is an event caused by something that happens to my body, why is it supposed to be unavailable as a source of my bodily reactions to the pain? Is it not merely a piece of philosophical legislation, not an implication of the concept of pain, that a pain cannot be cited as the cause of a bodily movement of the sufferer? And if it should be conceded that not only is my pain caused by your touching my arm, but in turn it caused my arm to jerk away from your touch, the pain would be an intermediate event, connected to your touching and my movement in a causal chain. It would then be very difficult to preserve the causal isolation of my pain from its verbal (or merely vocal) expression.

On intimate terms

François Recanat

DAVID COOPER
Metaphor
282pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £25.
019 149384

Metaphor is an important and exciting topic, of central concern not only to linguists, philosophers of language and literary theorists, but also to psychologists and philosophers of science. Every contribution to our understanding of it is welcome, especially when it is one with a wide appeal, purporting to summarize and synthesize the current literature. This is, basically, the purpose of David Cooper's wide-ranging book – the fifth in the promising Aristotelian Society Series published by Blackwell. Reading the book is frustrating, however, because Cooper does not tell us what we want to know; he asks the right questions, but does not succeed in providing answers.

We want to know what metaphor is – what characterizes metaphorical utterances, in contrast to both literal utterances and other types of non-literal or figurative utterance. (This is the “demarcation problem”, presented in Cooper's book along with some of the reasons why metaphor has become an important and controversial topic.) Most people believe that there is something special about the manner in which metaphorical and other non-literal utterances are used, and that this specialness is not possess-

ances. Some say that the words take on a special meaning in metaphorical utterances; others that although they do not take on special meanings, the speaker of a metaphor means by his words something different from what they mean. In Chapter Two Cooper argues that both views are mistaken. Following Donald Davidson, he holds that there is nothing special about the meaning of metaphors, whether at the semantic level of word-meaning or at the pragmatic level of “speaker's meaning”. Metaphors are simply utterances which do not purport to “convey a belief”. What, then, is their function? This is the main problem discussed in Chapter Three. Metaphors, Cooper thinks, can achieve many different things – “stimulate imagery, prompt comparisons, lend memorable expression to theories, evoke atmospheres, create a mood of conceptual disturbance, and so on” – but their global, sustaining function is to “cultivate intimacy” among the people capable of interpreting metaphors in general or a certain metaphor in particular. The fourth and last chapter is devoted to the notion of “metaphorical truth”, which Cooper dismisses as he has already dismissed the notion of “metaphorical meaning”.

The special “intimacy” which it is the function of metaphors to cultivate being the sense of belonging to an interpretative elite, Cooper owes us an account of what it is to interpret a metaphor. No such account, however, is provided. What he has to say on this topic is mostly negative: to interpret a metaphor is “not to understand it”, and other non-literal utterances are “not to be understood”.

Metaphor is a special case of a more general phenomenon, the use of language to create a special atmosphere or mood. This is the function of metaphorical utterances, in contrast to both literal utterances and other types of non-literal or figurative utterance. (This is the “demarcation problem”, presented in Cooper's book along with some of the reasons why metaphor has become an important and controversial topic.) Most people believe that there is something special about the manner in which metaphorical and other non-literal utterances are used, and that this specialness is not possess-

general at least, to grasp a context which the speaker or writer intends to convey; it is to have certain thoughts as a result of hearing or reading the metaphor, which thoughts must be interesting enough to “justify” it. They need not be propositional, let alone consist in a comparison, and need not have been foreseen by the speaker or writer.

There is some truth in some of Cooper's remarks, but they are far from constituting a genuine account of the phenomenon of metaphor. To achieve that, we would do better to go back to, and elaborate, the “standard view”, according to which metaphors are used to communicate something which is different from, although related to, what the words literally mean. Cooper rejects this view, but in this case (as in others) he misses the target. His main argument against the communicative approach is that the “content” of a given metaphor is often indeterminate. Like many others, he takes it for granted that the content of a communicative act must be determinate. But consider the following example of non-verbal communication, which I borrow from Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's book *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (reviewed in the TLS on September 19, 1986):

Mary and Peter are newly arrived at the seaside. She opens the window overlooking the sea and sniffs appreciatively and ostentatiously. When Peter follows suit, there is no particular good thing that comes to his attention: the air smells fresh, fresher than it did in town; it reminds him of their previous holiday in the south of France.

This example displays those features of metaphorical utterances which prompted Davidson's and Cooper's rejection of the communicative approach – indeterminacy, resistance to paraphrase, non-propositionality, imperfect match between the speaker's intention and the hearer's interpretation. . . . But non-verbal communication is communication: by sniffing ostentatiously, Mary “means” something, in Paul Grice's sense. Cooper claims that the pragmatic notion of “speaker's meaning” is irrelevant in the case of metaphor, but he does not even mention Grice's famous elaboration of it. This is unfortunate, for there are reasons to believe that the theory of communication based on Grice's ideas can accommodate metaphorical utterances in the same way as it can accommodate non-verbal communication. It is ironic that Blackwell should have published Cooper's *Metaphor* in the same year as Sperber and Wilson's book, in which a genuine account of metaphor is presented, faithful to the “standard view” but avoiding all the objections levelled against it by Cooper.

Reigns in Spain

I. A. A. Thompson

A. W. LOVETT
Early Habsburg Spain 1517-1598
352pp. Oxford University Press. £25 (paperback, £9.95).
019 8221398

Early modern Spain has been well served by historians. R. B. Merriman and Trevor Davies and, more recently, remarkable works of synthesis and interpretation by J. H. Elliott, John Lynch, Domínguez Ortiz and Henry Kamen have kept successive generations of students not only informed, but challenged and inspired.

A. W. Lovett is, therefore, competing with a field of outstanding talent and scholarship. His one advantage was that he could have been up to date, and had he kept to his original intention of summarizing recent research, *Early Habsburg Spain 1517-1598* might have had some point. Instead, he has chosen to embark on a general review of early Habsburg Spain in the form of a series of lectures purporting to serve as a “teaching manual”. It is not at all clear what kind of teachers he has in mind. His text is too elementary to add much to what they will already know, and, as might be expected from someone with an avowed admiration for historians of past generations, reflects little of the concerns and approaches of current historiography. Since the 1970s in Spain there has been an explosion of historical activity, but instead of imparting a sense of its excitement, Lovett's depressingly old-fashioned narrative either passes over the results of recent research or liquidizes the old and the new into indistinguishable mush. The chapter on the Church, for example, reiterates the sort of material on the Inquisition that can be found anywhere, but gives no indication of the exciting and original use now being made of trial records, shrines and local devotions to reconstruct a social history of popular culture and religion.

In this respect there is an abyss between this text and the long, undated bibliography. This, determinedly *au jour*, gives a very full idea of how much is being done. The reader

will not discover, however, what it is that is being done. The reference to new thinking on the role and nature of the Cortes is a case in point. C. D. Hendricks's work on the Cortes of Charles V is not mentioned, and the rehabilitation of its political role after the defeat of the Comuneros by Hendricks and Stephen Haliczer ignored, as is the significance of the 1590s for the subsequent history of the Cortes.

The capriciousness of the bibliography also reveals a real confusion as to the purpose and the targets of the book. Not one in a thousand of the readers it is aimed at will have access to the abstruse foreign-language titles listed. Yet dozens of important recent works in English are not cited, Richard Kagan's being only the most glaring of the omissions.

Even Lovett's title is something of a misnomer. The chapters which deal with the internal histories of the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Mexico and Peru are only indirectly related to the history of Spain. There is no serious analysis here of military and naval imperatives, of policy-making in Madrid, of Spain's strategic priorities. Important discussions of these issues by J. F. Gullmar, David Lagomarsino, De Lamar Jensen and Geoffrey Parker go unnoticed. Indeed, for a history of sixteenth-century Spain it is unbelievable what has been left out. There is no art, no literature, no intellectual history, no universities, no Loyola, no Teresa, no John of the Cross, no law, no *letrados*, no *hidalgos*, nothing on Italy, precious little politics, administration or local government, and hardly any social or economic history. There is a chapter entitled “The economic life of the peninsula”. It runs to five-and-a-half pages, four of which recount the history of the Mesta back to the thirteenth century; the rest covers the wool trade, communal pastures, and the price revolution. Students reading this could be forgiven for believing that no wheat was grown in Spain; that there was no wine, no oil, no cloth, no silk, no iron, no commerce.

Baynd quite a perceptive chapter on the *moriscos*, and a certain amount of useful material on Aragon and on population, for example, it is difficult to see what this book offers to the student that is not already

John Co. 1516

New magic in the old web

Tessa Rajak

EMIL SCHÜRER
The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ
Volume Three, Part One (175 sc-AD 135)
Revised and edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Martin Goodman
704pp. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. £25.
0567 022447

This year a major scholarly enterprise will reach fruition: the last lap of the revised English version of Emil Schürer's great German *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*. It will be completed soon by Volume Three, Part Two, which will also carry the index to the whole work. The new English edition was launched in 1973, with Volume Two appearing in 1979. In Volume Three, Part One we have reached the Jewish Diaspora and "Literature".

Academic histories do not normally achieve revision long after they were written: they just get superseded. So far, however, were Schürer's densely documented volumes from obscurity in the 1960s that the lack of an English version of their final edition (1901-09) was still sharply felt. After an earlier plan for a translation, mildly updated, what has emerged is very much more daring: a total reworking of the original in the light of the copious fresh evidence that has come to light since Schürer's lifetime (1844-1910) and a presentation of that evidence together with a guide to its interpretation. The result is a new and unified whole, whose stylistic cohesion has been secured by the skill of Pamela Verner, the work's literary editor. In the great age of *Altertumswissenschaft*, Schürer stood out; in the present day, where academic self-effacement is none too common, the selfless and equally talented labours of his editors are even more deserving of acknowledgement.

That the theme is broad in scope is apparent from the fact that collaboration was required, in a venture initiated by a theologian (Matthew Black, the *History's* organizing editor), between Jewish Studies (Geza Vermes) and Classics (Fergus Millar and Martin Goodman). Schürer was Professor of Theology in the University of Göttingen, and founder of the

Theologische Literaturzeitung. He published the first small version of his *History* in 1874 as a *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Zeitgeschichte*. But its ultimate title and contents reveal an enlarged perspective. It had become manifest that New Testament History entailed a study of the Jews and their culture over several centuries, and this led into a formidable number of diverse areas. That, indeed, is what constitutes the value of a guide like Schürer's end what has justified the updating. The fate of the Jews was always bound up with that of the nations in whose midst they found themselves, and Judaism will remain a closed book to those who think compartmentally. This makes it paradoxical – or perhaps explicable – that the stigma of exclusivity has so often been attached to the Jews – as even, in this volume, by Schürer himself at some unfortunate moments.

But the true picture emerges from the assembled material, and it is one of a culture powerful in its own right, quite distinct from and yet enmeshed in its Classical environment, with permeability both ways. Thus, in this revised *History*, one can find some of the best available short summaries of important topics in Greek and Roman history, such as foreign groups in Graeco-Roman paganism, foreign cults in Graeco-Roman cities, and even the thorny problem of the Roman citizenship.

Schürer also took a broad view of what was chronologically germane to his theme. His narrative sections run well beyond the ages of Jesus and Paul, to the Jewish revolt under Hadrian; the portrayal of institutions and of literature goes even further, taking us into Mishnaic matters (occasionally misused to explain the earlier period) and, for the Diaspora, into the Severan age, when the surviving inscriptions become more plentiful and revealing. The revision rather accentuates this trait, because the newer epigraphic evidence gets considerable attention, including the remarkable and not yet published late dedication put up by an association of Jews, proselytes and sympathizers in Aphrodisias, Caria.

Certain aspects of Schürer's conceptual framework could not stand; and changes in headings and nomenclature alone reveal how many perspectives have altered since his day. Especially where literature was concerned, ill-founded old assumptions had to go, and there have been a number of sophisticated strategic

decisions to be made. So we now have no dichotomy between Palestinian and Hellenistic writings, because, in the wake especially of Martin Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*, it is no longer acceptable to say that a Jewish work written in Greek could not have been composed in a Palestinian milieu. Instead, there are sections for "works composed in Hebrew and Aramaic", for those composed in Greek, and (to come to Part Two) for those whose original language is uncertain. "Sacred Legend" has become "Biblical Midrash", and includes now the Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran – but excludes the well-known romance of Joseph and Aseneth, which has gone to the Greek section. The effect is to remove texts from the realm of pure fairy-tale, and to associate them with the mainstream of Jewish non-legal religious thought, *aggadah* (a category of which Schürer himself was scarcely aware). "Historical Literature" (in Greek) becomes "Prose Literature about the Past", which can then take in biblical exegesis, like the Testament of Job, and can link up with Hebrew and Aramaic Midrash, showing how arbitrary the language divide could be. The reader becomes aware that historical thinking was scarcely separate at this time (as it was not at others) from biblical exegesis. What Schürer described as "Jewish Propaganda in Pagan Disguise" (*unter heidnischen Maske*) becomes "Jewish Writings under Gentile Pseudonyms": the altered implication is obvious, and elsewhere in the text, even in the revised form, we can still discern an excessive readiness to see what the Jews wrote as designed merely to impress others, a readiness which arose, no doubt, from a certain partisanship on the part of the author in later Jewish-Christian antagonism.

But perhaps the most fundamental shift is in a quite new receptivity to Apocalyptic, to mysticism and to magic. Here the revisers have not only drawn upon the fruits of a real revolution in scholarship (of which Gershom Scholem was by no means the only begetter), but have themselves broken new ground by commissioning P. S. Alexander to draw an exciting preliminary map of the difficult evidence bearing on Jewish magic – which is often, as may be expected, scarcely distinguishable from its pagan counterpart.

Overall, the new arrangement gives due re-

spect to the startling heterogeneity of Jewishism, or rather Judaism, of the period. And in this spirit that, following on from the criticism of the Qumran sect in Volume Two, we now offered an excellent learned introduction to its literature, described largely in its own terms, and in its own context, and in its own genre. There is much that is original in this section; above all, perhaps, the original and brilliantly controlled comparison between the regulations in the recently published *Temple Scroll* (reviewed in the TLS, May 1985) and those in the long-known Damascus Rule. Equally, there is original research in the survey of the Diaspora communities.

Schürer, however, has not been entirely purged; indeed, there has been too much of it in the previous volumes of the *History* (and, just under a hundred (not counting forthcoming works) already in the 80s. At least two relevant books, Peter Fergusson's *Architecture of Solitude* and the collection on *Architecture and the Arts*, appeared in 1984, the year after the conference on which this volume is based. It contains sixteen contributions in addition to an introduction by the editors, Christopher Norton and David Park, and two tables, one of Cistercian legislation and architecture, classified by subject, and the other of the affiliations and founders of Cistercian houses in the British Isles, which include seventy from Clairvaux, twenty-seven from Savigny, eighteen from L'Aumône, five from Cîteaux and three from Morimond. The first four articles, which are broadly historical, are concerned with the foundation and planning of Cistercian houses (Christopher Brooke and Janet Burton) and with Cistercian legislation and attitudes towards art (Christopher Holdsworth and C. H. Talbot). There are five articles on architecture (Richard Halsey, Christopher Wilson, Nicola Coldstream, Peter Fergusson and Roger Stalley) and seven respectively on painting (Perk), window glass (Richard Marks), the pavements (Norton), metalwork (Jane Geddes), seals (T. A. Heslop), manuscripts (Anne Lawrence) and the liturgy (David Chadd). Aside from a few omissions, notably woodwork and sculpture (which is dismissed at one point as "tomb effigies and other clutter") and textiles and vestments, this is the most comprehensive work on the art and architecture of the Cistercians in any part of Europe.

The tension between uniformity (central control) and regionalism (local influences) runs through most of the contributions, and is to some extent resolved in the title, which more or less assumes there was a degree of distinctiveness ("Cistercian art and architecture") with regional manifestations ("in the British Isles"). One of the purposes of the volume is to study the art and architecture of the order in the light both of its legislation and of the associations of individual houses, and the editors in their introduction pose the general questions of uniformity, distinctiveness, Burgundian influence, and enforcement, to which can be added a fifth question of the role of local founders and patrons. No clear answers emerge to any of these questions, and some authors frankly express scholarly despair. Brooke, for instance, says that his purpose is to ask questions and that he neither knows "the answers to many of them, nor for some how to set about finding them", and Stalley confesses his inability to explain the popularity of the Cistercians in the mid-twelfth century. Burton finds it perplexing that many founders of Cistercian abbeys also patronized houses of other orders. Here a discussion of the broader setting of the movement of religious reform might have been helpful. The distinctiveness of the Cistercians was less apparent to contemporaries than to later scholars; and their patrons, like those in later ages, tried to hedge their spiritual bets.

Many of the authors seem to be looking for uniformity and distinctiveness and almost reluctantly reach the conclusion that they were ideals rather than realities. Coldstream refers to "a Cistercian demeanour, perhaps a Cistercian habit of thought, rather than anything more precise", which cut across the prevailing tendency towards regionalism. Lawrence, while concentrating on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries "in order to establish the growth of a recognizable Cistercian aesthetic", admits that there was no real uniformity in the script or decoration of manuscripts, and the subtitle of Chadd's article on the liturgy is "The limits of uniformity". For Halsey, "the most telling evidence of a recognizable Cistercian manner is the rapidity with which non-Cistercian monastic churches in England were built more or less to this plan", but, in view of the doubts in dating, this evidence cuts both ways, and the Cistercians may have followed rather than set the prevailing styles.

There seems to have been a series of generational shifts in artistic and architectural styles, corresponding to those in religious life. Though no one pursues the suggestion made by Lawrence (and elsewhere by Fergusson), that uniformity and simplicity became objectives only about 1130 – perhaps owing to the influ-

In the monastic manner

Giles Constable

CHRISTOPHER NORTON and DAVID PARK
Cistercian Art and Society in the British Isles
(ed.)
Cambridge Art and Society in the British Isles
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. £60.
0521 254752

There seems to be no end to the current boom in Cistercian studies. Of the approximately 850 titles in the bibliography of *Cistercian Art and Society in the British Isles* almost half were published in the past twenty-five years: over a hundred in the 1960s, almost two hundred in the 1970s, and just under a hundred (not counting forthcoming works) already in the 80s. At least two relevant books, Peter Fergusson's *Architecture of Solitude* and the collection on *Architecture and the Arts*, appeared in 1984, the year after the conference on which this volume is based. It contains sixteen contributions in addition to an introduction by the editors, Christopher Norton and David Park, and two tables, one of Cistercian legislation and architecture, classified by subject, and the other of the affiliations and founders of Cistercian houses in the British Isles, which include seventy from Clairvaux, twenty-seven from Savigny, eighteen from L'Aumône, five from Cîteaux and three from Morimond. The first four articles, which are broadly historical, are concerned with the foundation and planning of Cistercian houses (Christopher Brooke and Janet Burton) and with Cistercian legislation and attitudes towards art (Christopher Holdsworth and C. H. Talbot). There are five articles on architecture (Richard Halsey, Christopher Wilson, Nicola Coldstream, Peter Fergusson and Roger Stalley) and seven respectively on painting (Perk), window glass (Richard Marks), the pavements (Norton), metalwork (Jane Geddes), seals (T. A. Heslop), manuscripts (Anne Lawrence) and the liturgy (David Chadd). Aside from a few omissions, notably woodwork and sculpture (which is dismissed at one point as "tomb effigies and other clutter") and textiles and vestments, this is the most comprehensive work on the art and architecture of the Cistercians in any part of Europe.

The tension between uniformity (central control) and regionalism (local influences) runs through most of the contributions, and is to some extent resolved in the title, which more or less assumes there was a degree of distinctiveness ("Cistercian art and architecture") with regional manifestations ("in the British Isles"). One of the purposes of the volume is to study the art and architecture of the order in the light both of its legislation and of the associations of individual houses, and the editors in their introduction pose the general questions of uniformity, distinctiveness, Burgundian influence, and enforcement, to which can be added a fifth question of the role of local founders and patrons. No clear answers emerge to any of these questions, and some authors frankly express scholarly despair. Brooke, for instance, says that his purpose is to ask questions and that he neither knows "the answers to many of them, nor for some how to set about finding them", and Stalley confesses his inability to explain the popularity of the Cistercians in the mid-twelfth century. Burton finds it perplexing that many founders of Cistercian abbeys also patronized houses of other orders. Here a discussion of the broader setting of the movement of religious reform might have been helpful. The distinctiveness of the Cistercians was less apparent to contemporaries than to later scholars; and their patrons, like those in later ages, tried to hedge their spiritual bets.

Many of the authors seem to be looking for uniformity and distinctiveness and almost reluctantly reach the conclusion that they were ideals rather than realities. Coldstream refers to "a Cistercian demeanour, perhaps a Cistercian habit of thought, rather than anything more precise", which cut across the prevailing tendency towards regionalism. Lawrence, while concentrating on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries "in order to establish the growth of a recognizable Cistercian aesthetic", admits that there was no real uniformity in the script or decoration of manuscripts, and the subtitle of Chadd's article on the liturgy is "The limits of uniformity". For Halsey, "the most telling evidence of a recognizable Cistercian manner is the rapidity with which non-Cistercian monastic churches in England were built more or less to this plan", but, in view of the doubts in dating, this evidence cuts both ways, and the Cistercians may have followed rather than set the prevailing styles.

There seems to have been a series of generational shifts in artistic and architectural styles, corresponding to those in religious life. Though no one pursues the suggestion made by Lawrence (and elsewhere by Fergusson), that uniformity and simplicity became objectives only about 1130 – perhaps owing to the influ-

ence of Bernard – several authors suggest that there was a relaxation about 1160 and again, more markedly, around 1200, which constituted a sort of turning-point. Coldstream distinguishes "a brief twelfth-century phase" in Cistercian architecture, which she attributes as much to poverty as to principle, and Fergusson suggests parallels between the building campaigns at Rievaulx and Kirkstall in the mid and late twelfth century with those at Clairvaux and Fontenay, though the chronology is uncertain.

There are no clear answers to the questions of Burgundian influence and of control by the general chapters or mother houses. No writer faces the issues of pre-existing buildings or of the books and objects brought by new communities from other places. Most of them seem to accept the contemporary topoi that the settlements were on virgin land in wooden buildings, which were later replaced by stone constructions, though there is good evidence that some early Cistercians, including the founders of the New Monastery at Cîteaux, made use of inhabited sites. Not many new communities, I think, had the good fortune to move into buildings specially constructed before they arrived so as to allow them, as Halsey says, "to follow their strict Rule properly from day one". Many factors, including the founders, Isy-brothers (about whom there are a few loose remarks here) and secular workers, entered into the construction of permanent buildings. Some writers make much of the role of monks like Adam of Meaux, Geoffrey of Ainal and Robert of Clairvaux, who were sent to assist in setting up new abbeys, but it strains the evidence to describe them as architectural supervisors or as master-masons. Bernard asked Malachy to help Robert so that Mellifont would be advanced "in buildings and in other necessities", and there is disagreement even among the scholars writing in this volume over whether the *officinas* arranged by Geoffrey at Fontenay were buildings or liturgical offices.

In spite of an occasional tendency to stress the primacy and distinctiveness of the Cistercians and to exaggerate the influence of Bernard's *Apology* most of the articles come down on the side of regionalism, as might be expected of scholars who have worked primarily (and sometimes exclusively) on regional materials. Rievaulx, for Halsey, was "an Anglo-Roman Romanesque church which conformed to the Cistercian architectural aesthetic in having little ornament, most likely no crossing tower or triforium and in being built to a plan

recently formulated in Burgundy", and Coldstream urges that the Cistercians must be studied in relation to other orders and secular patrons, who soon began to treat them like other Benedictines. The articles on tile pavements, seals and manuscripts likewise lay greater emphasis on their local than on their distinctively Cistercian character.

Very few of the authors lean towards dogmatism, however, either on this or on other points. Some of them, indeed, pile so many probabilities, apparenties and likelihoods on top of solids, mayas and musts that it is hard to find any solid scholarly ground. The situation is not improved by the system of references, which makes no distinction between sources and secondary works, so that Robert of Bridlington is cited as "Anon. 1960", Walter Map as "James 1983" and William of Malmesbury as "Stubbs 1887-9". There is a disturbing tendency to rely on translations of the works, for example, of Bernard, Suger, Idungus and Caesarius of Heisterbach. The singular monk in Bernard's *Steps of Humility* judges the thinness and pallor of his face by looking at his own arms and legs, not in a mirror, which would have no place in a Cistercian abbot. *De gustibus* applies to art historians as well as others, and there is an agreement here concerning the quality of Cistercian art, which some authors find crude and others fine; but it may be a mistake to say with Stalley that abstract patterns, as in painting, sculpture, or glass, were "intended to be neutral in their visual impact", since their role in promoting meditation requires further study. On points like this, as on the motivations of patrons, the Cistercians need to be seen as part of the general spiritual movement of the twelfth century. One of the strengths of this work, however, is that it concentrates on facts, and especially the material legacy of the Cistercians in the British Isles, and leaves to others the more speculative questions about the meaning and influence of religious art.

Lockert Library
of Poetry
in Translation

Birds and Other Relations

Selected Poetry of
Dezso Tondori

Translated by Bruce Berlind

Born in Budapest in 1938, Dezso Tondori is a novelist, playwright, translator, and graphic artist, as well as one of Hungary's most celebrated poets. Here for the first time in English is a booklength selection of his work. Brilliantly eccentric, and characterized by an astonishing formal dexterity, these poems address fundamental issues: the effort to establish personal identity in an impersonal world, the conflicting demands – private, social, and historical – that provide the texture of a lived moment, and the necessity of affirmation that finds its locus in the act of writing. Tondori manages these themes with an exuberance that mediates, as it enhances, their essential seriousness. The poems for this bilingual edition were chosen in consultation with the poet and are introduced by the translator. P. \$9.50. C. \$26.00

Prices are in U.S. Dollars
Order from your local bookseller or from
Princeton University Press
15A Eppson Road
Guildford Surrey GU1 3JT

Rules and mysteries

J. R. Porter

JOHN BARTON
Oracles of God: Perceptions of ancient prophecy in Israel after the Exile
324pp. Darton, Longman and Todd. £12.95.
0232 516669

Oracles of God is a really important contribution to biblical studies. It tackles a subject which has not been comprehensively treated before and its numerous original suggestions compel the reader to view many much-discussed problems in a quite new light. The argumentation is subtle and ingenious and this is certainly a specialist work, but the style is clear and lively, marked by forthright and sometimes delightfully disrespectful comments. One finishes reading it both instructed and entertained.

A good deal of attention has been paid in recent Old Testament scholarship to the ways in which later Judaism came to view the ancient prophets, through the study of subsequent additions to the original prophetic oracles. But Dr Barton casts his net much more widely. In a sweep that he seeks particularly to justify in his first two chapters. He argues that all the books, apart from the Pentateuch, in the existing Jewish canon, were viewed in the post-exilic period as "prophecies", whether or not a modern reader would so consider them; and that many of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings were also intended as "prophecies". This is a most illuminating proposal, one only wonders whether logically Barton should exclude even the Pentateuch. For when he writes, "there were certainly those in New Testament times for whom 'prophetic' books revealed arcane mysteries, whereas the Torah gave instruction on how to live", one could point out that there were also many for whom the Torah revealed arcane mysteries, as the finds at Qumran witness, and the "prophets" undoubtedly provided *halakah* (law), as Barton fully shows in the chapter "Prophecy as Ethical Instruction".

Much of Barton's case here rests on his view of the shape of the canon – or its lack of shape – in the period he surveys. He holds that there had not then emerged a tripartite division but only a bipartite one, "the law and the prophets", the latter category including all the other writings held to be "Scripture". Indeed, he argues powerfully, following writers like A. C. Sundberg and S. Z. Leiman but going well beyond them; that at this time there was no canon, apart perhaps from the Torah, in the sense of a list which could not be added to. There was a body of writings recognized as authoritative Scripture, but different groups would differ as to its content and have no compunction about adding to it. Agalo, one wonders about the Pentateuch: one notes Barton's own stimulating remarks about certain sectarian writings which some would have considered as superior to the Torah, and is it not quite likely that the author of Jubilees might have thought of his work as virtually a sixth book of Moses?

Barton effectively demonstrates how flimsy is the evidence for the general consensus about the development of the canon. But perhaps his discussion still leaves room to hold that in the late so period there was a body of recognized Scripture, side by side with the Torah, comprising more or less the former and latter prophets of the existing Jewish canon. He observes that, by New Testament times, these works would have been widely known. But also long-known, and this very fact, given the veneration for more antiquity, which Barton

properly emphasizes, would have given them a distinctive and separate position. That Daniel did not gain entry among them, when this might have been expected, remains an awkward fact; Barton's attempt to get round it is not very convincing.

The heart of *Oracles of God* consists of a discussion of the various ways in which the prophets, in the wide sense of the word, were read in the post-exilic period and of the sort of teachings the men of that time drew from ancient "prophecy" and expressed in their own imitations of it. Basically, the old "prophets" were seen as men inspired with knowledge direct from God, and hence this knowledge could comprise past and future and the mysteries of the heavenly world. This way of reading the prophets derives, says Barton, "from a reading back of contemporary 'prophecy' experience and expectation into ancient times" and he inclines to the opinion, which others have proposed, that the real authors of pseudonymous works may have had the same psychic experiences that they attribute to the supposed authors, or at least that they knew contemporaries who had had them, and even that they may have believed that they were only reproducing actual experiences of the ancient hero: it is debatable how far this meets the claim that pseudonymity represents a deliberate deception: what of those pseudonymous works which show no trace of "psychic experiences"? And precisely because, as Barton rightly stresses, the true prophetic age was viewed as over, and the prophets of that time were conceived of as enjoying a different level of inspiration from anything that came after, would post-exilic men have thought they could "reproduce" that inspiration would they have thought of themselves as "prophets" at all? Barton seems on safer ground when he suggests that those who would have described them-

selves as "wise", "teachers" or "Jesus". Phenomenologically there may be no great difference, but one wonders if the people's discussion would have seen it like that.

The great delight of this book is that there are so many fascinating observations of kind I have described. There is, however, an overriding presupposition of his book which must be noted in conclusion. This is that the outlook of post-exilic Judaism was so different from what had gone before that it had no conception of what the great prophetic books were really like. Of course, everyone recognizes that the Exile marked a great break, but for Barton, at least in the area which he is concerned, there was virtually no break. So, concludes Barton, "Daniel Wellhausen was essentially right" – against much in more recent scholarship – in their perception of the great prophetic books and what Judaism and Christianity have of them. This poses a whole range of problems, but the fundamental problem is to get the prophetic books, to the prophets themselves. And, to be fair to the post-exilic period, we know only the books, as Barton is fully aware, and the books were, as we now see, highly interpretive. The process of interpretation seems to have begun very early, perhaps implied even in writing down, and to be accepted as "genuine" oracles, rather than being doing this unless they are left to the succeeding ages have played a part in understanding what the prophets were like, and it makes its case well. *Oracles of God* is also much more than that, and it is forward to further exciting and useful studies from John Barton, as he pursues the quest of the historical prophet.

The Gothic launching-pad

Alan Borg

CAROLINE A. BRUZELIUS
The Thirteenth-Century Church at St Denis
Yale University Press. £30.
0300 01914

A. L. GERSON (Editor)
St Denis and St Denis
New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
\$69.95 408 S

Every schoolboy knows, Gothic art started at St Denis. Like most such statements, this requires considerable amplification but, in the rib-vaults of Durham or the flying buttresses of Chartres, it remains true that St Denis is the building to which all the elements that make up Gothic style were put together for the first time. This is to itself would have made the church a good subject for art historians, but it has three other elements which make it wholly irresistible. First, to Abbot Suger, a splendid self-publicist, who wrote his new church at length. Second, it has often been altered and modified over the years, so that the original fabric has disappeared or been restored, and scholars a field day in reconstructing the thirteenth-century St Denis.

In the twentieth century St Denis has been the services of a distinguished American historian, Sumner McKnight Crosby, who Kenneth Constant at Cluny, devoted to the elucidation of his chosen model, and bequeathed an apparently endless stream of research projects to his many students. One of these students was Caroline Bruzelius, who was entrusted with the study of the thirteenth-century rebuilding of those parts of the church that Abbot Suger did not get round to in the twelfth century. It is a proper subject, which has received comparatively little attention in the past, and the result is a text of modest length which treats the topic in a series of sensible steps. We are first reminded of the constraints which faced the thirteenth-century builders. Suger do doubt intended the eventual replacement of the Carolingian nave, but in the event he only constructed a new east end and western facade. It was left to Abbot Eudes Clément to undertake the completion of the Gothic structure, in a campaign begun and, it is argued, fully designed in 1231 but only consecrated in 1281. The new work was in the developed Gothic style known as Rayonnant, but scholars have always remarked on the exceptional compatibility of the two Gothic phases. It is clear that trouble was taken to preserve and to harmonize with Suger's building, and here Bruzelius is probably right to stress the continuing royal interest in the abbey and the personal involvement of Louis IX. The intention was to reaffirm the link between St Denis and the French crown and to assure the abbey's status as the royal mausoleum.

Before the actual thirteenth-century fabric can be examined it is necessary to disentangle it from the extensive post-medieval restorations and alterations. The author provides a useful summary of these, but there is little doubt that another of Professor Crosby's former students is somewhere working on a definitive history of the restoration programmes. There follows a traditional architectural analysis

of the plan, elevation, decoration and proportion of the new church, which manages to produce seven campaigns of construction within a structure that shows a remarkable overall unity of design. This sort of detailed dissection of a building is always valuable, but one is left with the feeling that it is the stuff of learned journals, more at home in the pages of the *Bulletin Monumental* than between hard covers, and this is the impression given by the work as a whole. The inevitable conclusion is that the thirteenth-century church at St Denis does not really warrant a book to itself. This is not to criticize Bruzelius's work which, of its genre, is admirable; the final two chapters make a case for regarding St Denis as a central and synthetic building in the early Rayonnant style, but the suspicion remains that this research has been turned into a book because book rate higher than articles in the academic rat-race.

Abbot Suger and St Denis also highlights the book/article conflict. It contains a series of twenty-three articles, all about Abbot Suger and his world, gathered together in book form (and inevitably dedicated to Professor Crosby). These are the fruits of a symposium held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1981, to commemorate the 900th (or was it the 901st?) anniversary of the Abbot's birth. It is unclear for whom this book is intended. It is not for the reader who wants to know the basic facts about Suger and St Denis, since all the articles, though learned, are peripheral to those topics, dealing with such matters as Suger and the *Moe Anagogica*, or Suger and the *Paradoxe* tradition.

